

# INDIA

*Reply to her Critics*

By

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Most Authoritative & Informative

*Dedicated*

TO

Beverley Nichols and that vast army of  
Mr & Mrs Smiths who think in terms of 'Nicholsism'.

# Reply to Verdict on India.

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## FORE WORD.

This book is neither a tirade nor a propaganda venture on behalf of Nichols friends ... 'The Hindus, nor is it written with an anti-British spirit. It is the truth served up neat with no embellishments.

This ~~piece~~ <sup>work</sup> of work unlike Nichols is the record of several years' study of India of the past and present. It has taken well over a year to write and a charge might be made that a reply to Nichols momentous tome 'Verdict on India' is delayed and hence a bit stale. But the scope and mission of this book belies this charge. Replies to his work have made their appearance ere this, but they have concentrated on discrediting the author, whilst ignoring the essence of his attack viz the social, religious, political, and economic, allegations he has preferred against India. In this book I have endeavoured to answer these charges whilst attacking Nichols. The replies are rendered in a facile manner backed by arthoritative sources, so as to serve as a mine of information.

Beverley Nichols has made a number of allegations, but it would be tantamount to sheer dishonesty to characterise his work as a 'tissue of lies'. It is only fair that we concede a point in his favour by declaring that it is a collection of half-truths, backed up with his own interpretations, which in many cases have fallen far off the mark. That he has scored heavily in a few of his accusations is undeniable, but a fuller knowledge of facts

would have helped him considerably to understand the country better.

It is a humiliating confession to make that very few Indians know anything about their own homeland. The Anglo-Indians less still and the Britisher least of all. It is to these people that this piece of work is dedicated. Material has been drawn from various authorities on the widely ranging subjects treated in this book. The quotations are inserted to lend force to the arguments, but nowhere has any attempt been made to tear them out of reference to their context to prove my points. In some cases the quotations are exceptionally long drawn out, but I presume the reader will bear with me, since they bear out the argument without destroying the original author's view-point.

In respect of these references my obligation is due to "The Statesman," "The Daily Gazette," "Sind Observer," "The Times of India," "The Blitz," "The Sunday Standard", V. B. Kulkarni "Is Pakistan Necessary," Prof: A. B. Keith "Constitutional History of India", C. H. Afzal Haq "Pakistan and Untouchability", Hira Lal Seth "Moulana Abul Kalam Azad Portrait and Prospect", Hira Lal Seth "The Iron Dictator" Anand T. Hingorani "My Appeal to the British", Kanhya Lal Gauba "His Highness" D. F. Karaka "Out of Dust", K. T. Shah "Economic Background" Sir Edward Blunt "Caste Systems Of North And South India", S. Natarajan "Social Problems" Patrick Geddes "Dramatisations of History" T. N. Ramaswami "Economic Problems of India,"



T. Webber "Gandhi", C. F. Andrews "Mahatma Gandhi's ideas", Sir Sarvapalli Radha Krishnan "Cultural Problems", Annie Beasant "Four Great Religions", Annie Beasant "India A Nation, Pannikar "Hinduism and the Modern World," Dr: Dahalla "Our Perfecting World" Sir Abdul Qadir "Cultural Problems," Sir Jogendra Singh "Cultural Problems", "Young India, Harijan", R. I. Paul "Tagore's Pamphlets" Prof T. K. Dutt, "The Loin Cloth Laid Bare", D. P. Mukerjee "Indian Music", Prof Darbarra Singh "Indian Struggle 1942", Joseph McCabe "The Selected Woks of Voltaire," Glorney Bolton "Tragedy of Gandhi". F. M. De:Mello "The Indian National Congress". Kailash Chandra "Tragedy of Jinnah"; 'Civil and Military Gazette'; Tushar Kanti Ghosh "Bengal Tragedy"; Radhakamal Mukerjee "Food Supply". "Young India" "The Civil and Military Gazette". Appasamy in "Cultural Poblems". Prof. B. J. Vaswani "India Explained". Joseph McCabe "The God of War", etc:, etc:

*Denny D'silva.*

## CHAPTER I.

### By way of introduction.

Beverly Nichols' book entitled "Verdict on India" is nothing short of a challenge to any self-respecting Indian, who has had unlimited opportunities of studying at first hand the various economic, cultural, social and religious problems affecting the teeming millions populating this sub-continent. He has flung down the gauntlet, in the traditional British manner of interpreting everything in their own conservative way, through the medium of standards pertaining to western civilisation and without due regard to the background, which is essential in assessing problems of the east at their intrinsic value.

This book bristles with inaccuracies and the most one may say in its favour, to use the author's own phrase, that it is the record of over a years intensive study of modern India, with the accent on modern. One may go so far as to say that besides being representative of only a year's study no man in his right senses would be so indiscreet as to pose as an authority, much less write a book on every aspect of life in a country so huge as India with a population, whose lives are patterned by several hundred social customs rigidly enforced by its polygot religions and covering an area of millions of square miles. In truth the accent is not on modern but on the word "year" which is highly significant.

Mr. Nichols has gone to some pains to stress the fact that it is "all his own work" in the style

of the renowned pavement artist; that it is not 'British propaganda' or sponsored by the "India Office" representing the official point of view! But who cares whether he met Mr. Amery or was commissioned to do the job. This is irrelevant as its general theme harps on a very familiar note of British propaganda and prejudice. His apology may be true, but what Mr. Beverly Nichols must bear in mind is the fact that he is one of the rising young authors of the day, who has made his mark in English literary circles. As such he is looked up to and admired by millions of Englishmen in his own country and thousands on this side of the Suez Canal.

A book of this nature is the greatest disservice Mr. Beverly Nichols could do to this great country which is unselfishly sacrificing the flower of her manhood on the altar of mars (The God of War), so that England and the world may live free from the tyranny of the Nazi terror. Surely the word 'Mehrbani' (gratitude; thanks) which he so patiently sought for, must be given a more practical expression in his heart and his writings of which "Verdict on India" is but typical of the debt owed and repaid by Britishers of the Beverly Nichols School of thought; and they are legion. In a fit of generosity we must confess that it is not worthy of the great Beverly Nichols; it will cause incalculable harm in moulding the opinion of a large section of the British Public, who are unable to acquaint themselves with the proper facts or those who could not be bothered to understand the people they live amongst, or their legiti-

gnate aspirations. This segment of people who are too lazy and self-centred in their racial outlook would be only too glad to have their opinions made up for them at Rs. 9-12-0 per copy, rather than waste years of study and research among 'live guinea-pigs'.

He came to India in the rôle of a correspondent of Allied newspapers, but his subsequent stay in this country, owing to medical and personal reasons, are now past history and well known to the reading public of India as the press did accord him undue publicity. That some papers attributed his presence on Indian soil to reasons political and otherwise, was nothing short of press policy common all over the globe in publishing matter differing from the accepted version and leaving it to Time to either confirm or refute the authenticity of such news in consonance with facts. I feel quite sure that no responsible newspaper of any standing would have taken such a liberty with facts and suggested or boosted him as the next candidate for the 'Viceregal Gadi'. If some section of the press hailed him as the future Viceroy one can hazard a guess as to the category of that newspaper and at the same time appreciate their sense of humour in converting a journalist and author into a future Viceroy of India as an afterthought to Grims Fairy Tales.

The ironic part of the book is the foreword where he has been gracious enough to offer an apology to his "many Indian friends, who offered him kindness and hospitality...in particular to the Hindus. He even unbends sufficiently to admit

that in some ways he hated it himself, as it is quite different from the book he intended to write. One may reasonably enquire here as to the motivating influence behind 'Verdict on India' if the author hated penning it? Did an undefined duty to his nationality impel him to write against his self confessed friends particularly when he hated doing it? or was it a duty to Christ (His Saviour) and the religion he follows devoutly to repay the 'Kindness and hospitality received at the hands of his friends, especially the Hindus? Did this 'Magnum Opus' owe its origin to its commercial possibilities especially when the time is ripe for such literary enterprises? or should one view it in a more altruistic light that the purpose behind 'Verdict on India' is to open the world's eyes to India's inability to solve her own problems? If this latter view is correct then one finds it extremely difficult to see how this purpose could be achieved by setting forth a number of facts that are wholly or partially incorrect and printing an unwarranted interpretation of those facts. Any attempt on Mr Beverly Nichols part to render help out of gratitude for the kindness and hospitality of his friends would be greatly appreciated by the Indian masses if he were to follow in the steps of Mrs Annie Bassant, Octavian Hume, and Andrews to name a few of that host of English people who were *real friends* of India.

If his high hopes have been blasted and his ideals besmirched before leaving the shores of this continent, one can only offer India's profound regret at disappointing so great a man as Mr.

## Beverly Nichols.

Before proceeding further with this self imposed task of penning a reply to 'Verdict on India' I feel that public ought to know something of the background of the author in order to assess the value of the arguments advanced in support of the stand undertaken by me, or to appreciate the view point expressed in the following chapters.

I belong to a community called the 'Anglo-Indians', which numbers less than three hundred and fifty thousand, in fact so small that we hardly have a voice in the political struggle of 400 million for Independence. Our origin owes itself chiefly to the fusion of western and eastern elements and this heritage forces us to identify ourselves with a marked pro-British outlook which is expressed in our ways of living and thinking even to the rabid anti-Indian bias, so much in evidence since the National cry for Swaraj (Independence) was raised by the Indian masses. From this the reader will realise that I have no 'axe' to grind in defending my Indian brethren. The desire to correct a few of the facts and theories enunciated in Beverly Nichols' book is well-nigh irresistible. So I have decided in all fairness to one half of my heritage and the land of my birth which I am proud of, to see that these impressions put forward be given their proper expression, and unlike Mr. Beverly Nichols who claims the unique distinction of studying the Indian Problem as an *observer* for a year or so, I have spent thirty years not only seeing the drama played before me but also living a part of it.

## CHAPTER II:

## The Elusive Indian.

An apology must be tendered to the public: and Mr. Beverly Nichols, to the former for treating this reply in a disjointed manner; this is inevitable as a suitable answer could not be marshalled into precise chapters owing to the style adopted in "Verdict on India", which compels one to deal with the points raised in the order they are presented. To the latter for borrowing the title of this chapter. I presume this liberty will be allowed for the benefit of the reader, who will be able to follow the argument more easily and at the same time be in a position to judge whether "Verdict on India" is a fair indictment of so large a nation.

"Have you ever met an Indian?" The question will undoubtedly startle anyone living in India or on a visit to these shores. Ask the average Englishman who has seen service in the Government or Military, particularly the latter, who would volunteer the information in the most forceful language.

The question must have startled Mr. Beverly Nichols, who had by this time traversed the length and breadth of India despite a poisoned foot. Evidently it was put to him by an Englishman (if it was ever put at all) for he mentions that twenty years in Darjeeling would have cured the interrogator of facetiousness. One conclusion is forced on us by the question of this tea planter, who had spent two decades in that part of the country where companionship was chiefly Indian and that

either he did not bother to acquaint himself better with his surroundings in a country that helped him to eke out his comfortable livelihood or his ignorance on the matter could only be regarded as monumental (Colossal).

A closer investigation reveals the possibility that this famous question "Have you ever met an Indian?" owes its origin to Mr. Beverly Nichols inspiration. It offers an excellent opportunity of opening a subject and also possesses the advantage of driving home the points, with which the writer seeks to convince the public on the topic under discussion.

However this is neither here nor there. Surely those Pathan murderers in the neighbouring ward of the hospital, who made such a profound impression on him with their pleasant temperament, soft voices and gentle gestures, were one hundred per cent. Indian as much as those dancing girls, so far removed from the remote fastnesses of the hilly North West Frontier Provinces, whom he has humorously described as the Indian counterpart of Miss Zazu Pitts, Miss Haidee Wright and a lady who greatly resembled the Duchess of Tek. If these real-life scenes are not Indian then one can only conclude that only when he sees them in celluloid presented by Alexander Korda through the kind auspices of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer would Mr. Beverly Nichols recognise the bearded ruffians and the dancing girls doing a Hollywood version of the Indian Ballet clothed in transparent attire, as *Indians*.



One can quite easily perceive his motive in submitting examples of the two main religious groups (Hindu and Muslim), 'as types which the question evoked in his mind. The motive is to ressurect the communal problem which seems to be the favourite bogcy raised by the die-hard Tories in Britain to bring to a stand still, whatever progress India makes on the road towards freedom: What else could be the inspiration behind this "Magnum Opus" on India, when these religious and political differences are given such wide publicity in it? How else could one account for his careful selection of attacks on Hinduism and the Congress, whilst at the same time expressing his admiration in no uncertain terms for the Mahommedans and the Muslim League leader Mr. Jinnah? It reminds us of another authoress Katherine Mayo in *Mother India*; who exposed the so-called vices of the Hindus and deliberately closed her eyes to the same offences committed by Muslims, such as child marriage etc, which is still practiced in States like Kashmir, under the egis of British rule. This denunciation of the Hindu on one hand, whilst extolling the Muslims on the other reeks terribly of the taint of the Minto-Morely reforms 1908, which aimed at isolating the Muslims from the Political struggle, when they awoke to a new consciousness of refusing to stand by passively, while the battle of freedom was being fought. In his book Beverly Nichols sounds like a 1944 off-shoot of the 'appeasement offensive' Tories of Great Britain, who gave birth to the ingenious Minto-Morley Reforms of 1908.

## II

Let us make a closer investigation of the subject and by touching on its salient features endeavour to understand the position better. India is composed of several political sections, which have their roots set firmly in religious soil. This spiritual (religious) background colours the individuals and the community's outlook in every sphere of activity, so much so, that one seldom experiences any difficulty in recognising the major groups, who are in the race for political freedom viz. Hindus and Muslims.

Taking the first group under survey we find that out of a total of four hundred million people of this country there are approximately two hundred and forty odd million Hindus. A community numbering more than half the total population and more than twice the number in any other community; such as the Muslims, Sikhs, Parsees, Christians, including the Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans.

The Hindu community is divided by its religious tenets into four separate castes. The Brahmins (Priest and ruling caste) the Kshatryas (the martial caste) Vaisaya (Merchants and trader caste) and Shudras (labourers and untouchable caste). From this social structure guided by religious dogmas one can readily appreciate the practical side of Hinduism, when applied to every day life.

This system which suited the type of society

during the time of Manu (originator of the caste-system) and responsible for handing down the Vedas and Upanishads) has served every generation efficiently from the Aryan period till the turn of this century. That it has survived every evolutionary change in the life of the country is a tribute to its all embracing character. To the Westerner steeped in the modern philosophy of western civilization this rigid enforcement of individuals into water-tight compartments of restriction physically, morally and spiritually for the rest of their lives is something repugnant and reminiscent of Europe during the Dark Ages. It is difficult to understand but "each religion has its own mission in the world and suited to the nations it is meant for, and the kind of civilisation it is to permeate" (Annie Beasant). This forms the essential background of any attempt made to understand it. Any approach made without due regard to environment, will only lead to unjust criticism.

Since western civilisation has made tremendous strides on the Indian sub-continent, through the advent of British rule, the people find themselves on the threshold of a new era. The era of free political thought based on a hope of achieving complete independence of foreign rule, and being capable of steering their country on democratic lines. There are a number of hurdles in the way of this achievement, one of which is the pressing problem of sixty odd million Untouchables belonging to the Shudra caste in the Hindu fold. Spiritually their position may appear correct, but

for the practical application of Democratic principles, this distinction of caste in the fields of human endeavour, precludes any possibility of these sixty million people from effectively contributing to the proper functioning of Democracy. No one realises this more than Gandhi, who has striven at the risk of his position socially and politically in the Congress to rent the veil of prejudice and free them from the bonds of virtual slavery imposed on them by the laws of Manu. In his paper "Harijan" May 25th, he writes "I have no hesitation whatsoever in saying that he who has the slightest Untouchability in him is wholly unfit for enrolment in the Satyagraha *Seva*. I regard untouchability as the root cause of our downfall and Hindu Muslim discord. Untouchability is the curse of Hinduism and therefore of India. The taint is so pervasive that it haunts man even after he has changed over to another faith." Again "Our ambition should be to enable the Harijan (untouchable) to rise to the highest rank but while that must be the ideal, it would be a good thing to train some Harijans to become accomplished cooks. I have observed that the more we draw them into domestic service, the quicker is the race of reform. Harijans who become absorbed in our homes lose all sense of inferiority and become a living link between other Harijans and Savarna (orthodox Hindus).

One can appreciate the enormity of the task undertaken by Gandhi and admire the courage and determination with which he dared to assail the bastions of orthodoxy, which have been the living

• symbol of Hinduism from time immemorial.

From the time of its inception the Indian National Congress chose to regard the Untouchables as a problem of the minorities under the heading of Scheduled classes, but with Gandhi's arrival on the political firmament this policy has undergone a radical change. Instead of granting them a fair representation in the legislatures and the government of the country as a separate entity, it is now prepared to make this concession till the herculean task of surmounting the artificial barriers of religion succeeds in uniting these unfortunates with their orthodox Hindu brothers. Besides this unity producing a stronger front it will enable the Untouchables to enjoy the privileges and facilities both socially and economically which are the heritage of the upper class Hindus.

To be dogmatic on the point of Indian citizenship by declaring that if one admitted the one hundred and eighty million orthodox Hindus to be Indians, then the sixty million Untouchables could not be classed in the same category, because spiritually they were opposed to each other, is to reduce the argument to a point of absurdity. Surely only the religious background of any nation could not entitle any foreigner to advance such monstrous theories and label them as facts. A deliberate misrepresentation of fact in this strain is almost criminal and cannot be condoned by the fact that the author sports the 'old school tie'. In the eyes of the ultra-christian of Eton it would be a mortal sin if any Indian arrived at a similar conclusion about an Englishman's status by employ-

ing the same argument that if the Catholics were regarded as English then the Protestants could not because they were spiritually opposed to each other (although they subscribe to the same religion, Christianity). The Catholic faith forbids its members to attend churches and meetings of the Protestant denomination under pain of excommunication and eternal damnation of the soul as they were heretics and acknowledged the king instead of the pope as the head of the church. During the reign of Queen Marry till the arrival of Queen Elizabeth England furnished a fitting spectacle to what depths religious fanaticism could sink. In depriving one religious sect of its nationality on the score of its divergences is to court ridicule, but Mr. Beverly Nichols is proof against that. His superior pose of an authority on Indian religions is endorsed by the public school spirit; which is so thinly veiled in "Verdict on India", as to be almost nude in spots. It would be of no avail to the Hindus who stand condemned to remind him that according to the Vedas an individual must pass through each successive stage in physical life to attain the highest spiritual happiness through a series of reincarnations.

### III

Let us leave the Hindus by all means and turn our attention to the one hundred million Muslims. They do not cry "We are India", but on the other hand their present leader Mr. Jinnah has thrown the bombshell of Pakistan insisting on a political division of this country into two major

groups. "Pakistan and Hindustan". But unimpeachable evidence that not *all* Muslims are behind this movement or under the banner of Pakistan held aloft by the Muslim League forces, one to the conclusion that it is just a party's political stunt. As proof we have thousands of Muslims in the ranks of the Indian National Congress, whose president at the moment is a noted religious scholar and politician Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad. Then the Majlis-i-Ahrar a proletarian organization (Muslim) under the leadership of religious minded people fighting on the side of the Congress. The Jamiat-ul-Ulema with a pro congress attitude and the All India Muslim Majlis, all with a very marked nationalistic outlook in contrast to the narrow communalism evinced by the Muslim League. Where may we ask does Beverly Nichols get his one hundred million Muslim protagonists for "Pakistan" when we have accounted for a large proportion and there is an equally large number of this community who have no interest in Politics and are not included in any political party? This must be mathematics *par excellencell* The Beverly Nichols method copy right.

Let us examine this profound discovery of Mr. Jinnah. This Utopia of "Pakistan" is impractical for several reasons, but it has its uses as an effective weapon of forcing more concessions from the Hindu majority towards the Muslim party's race for power. Unity and concerted action in the political field is of prime importance. At the present stage it is India's urgent need; but in aiming

at the vivisection of this country it shows up the sincerity of Mr. Jinnah's spirit of nationalism and the unscrupulous way of driving hard bargains with the Congress for Political priveleges. Besides being a nuisance value it has nothing further to recommend itself to the serious minded student of History, for it aims at the complete disruption of the Hindu Muslim masses and is the last remedy that can be hailed as a panacea for all Muslim ills.

The transplantation of the Muslim minorities to the regions defined as "Pakistan" to ensure the complete segregation of Indian Muslims from their Hindu brethren is a physical impossibility in view of their interests in commerce, sentiment, environment and the enormity of the task.

To support the claim for this Utopia on the issue of race alone sounds grotesque to any student of Indian History for many of the Muslims are converts to Islam. To quote V. B. Kulkarni in 'Is Pakistan necessary?' "We know that the first Muslims were but a handful and that despite their repeated invasions their numbers were not such as to have any decisive influence upon the racial composition of the Indian population. History does not record any Muslim immigration like those of the Aryans and other races. It is interesting to record here, the views of Professor A. B. Keith on the subject. He says 'It must be remembered that five sixths of the Muslims of India are the descendents of converted "Hindus" (a constitutional History of India P 287).



A study of facts constrains one to the belief that this dream Empire of Pakistan exists only in the brain of Mr. Jinnah for it cannot survive in reality either economically or geographically. It makes very interesting reading the foreword of 'Pakistan and untouchability' by another Muslim CH Afzal Huq. "But of this scheme which aims at the segregation of Indian Muslims is examined critically and rather dispassionately, the same-minded Muslims shall undoubtedly arrive at the conclusion that it is not a religious movement at all but it is solely inspired and engineered by political leaders who simply exploit the religious susceptibilities of the Muslim masses." Again in his comments on the promised land "But where is the promised land? What are its boundaries? No one knows and perhaps will not know till Doomsday. We must not run after a mirage, but try to live in India as good citizens and morally strong people. We must join hands with the lower strata of the other communities and clamour for social levelling and economic justice. I am sure the Nawabs and knights of my own community will turn down my advice, because they do not believe in social levelling and economic justice. Hindu capitalists want a Hindustan where they may be able to safely lord it over the destinies of the poorer classes of all communities. Mussalmans of high houses want a Pakistan where they may be able to exploit and rule the lower classes of the Hindus and Mussalmans alike. Sikhs of the upper classes also want a Punjab, where they may comfortably dominate the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh masses. Partition of India is in fact the cry of

the upper classes of all three communities. It is not a communal demand as some people think but a stunt in order that the poor classes may not concentrate their thoughts and energies on all important questions as social and economic justice.

This indictment of all the stans put forward by budding leaders of political thought by a Muslim at that exposes the hollowness of the claim preferred by Jinnah,

If his claim is based on religion and culture, then not only is this reason misconceived but highly untenable, because in matters concerning religion the Jamiat-ul-Ulema (religious scholars) and the Majlis-i-Ahrar would have raised their voices over the issue, but instead we have an able lawyer and politician Jinnah who occupies no position in the Jamiat-Ul-Ulema or the Majlis-a-Ahrar squawking about religious differences, particularly when Islam behoves its followers to make no distinction between the faithful and heretics regardless of caste or creed.

The prophet says "You shall not be Mussal-mans unless you learn to love your neighbours" and in similar vein "If you wish to serve God and His apostles might love you, then serve your neighbours". One is entitled to enquire of Jinnah if the above sayings of the Quran gave him the inspiration of Pakistan as the true way of serving his neighbour?

To show that religious differences are not the root cause of the Hindu-Muslim friction Ch: Afzal

Huq says "However it is clear from the prevalent customs of Mussulmans and the rapid growth of Khanqahs that the religious beliefs of Hindus and Muslims are not poles asunder as people are apt to believe. One must also admit that Sufism and Vedanta theories are the guiding principles of the Muslims and Hindus respectively."

Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, President of the Indian National Congress summed up every sane and practical Muslim's outlook when he confessed "As a Mussulman I have a special interest in Islamic religion and culture and I cannot tolerate any interference with them". "But in addition to these sentiments, I have others which the realities and the condition of my life have forced upon me. The Spirit of Islam does not come in the way of these sentiments: it guides and helps me forward. I am proud of being an Indian. I am a part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality. I am indispensable to this noble edifice and without me this splendid structure of India is incomplete. I am an essential element which has gone to build India. I can never surrender this claim".

"It was India's historic destiny that many human races and cultures and religions should flow to her, finding a home in her hospitable soil and many a caravan should find rest here. Even before the dawn of history, these caravans trekked into India and wave after wave of newcomers followed. This vast and fertile land gave welcome to all and took them to her bosom. One of the last of these caravans following in the footsteps of its predecessors was that of the followers of

Islam. This came here and settled for good. This led to a meeting of the culture-currents of two different races. Like the Ganges and Jumna they flowed for a while through separate courses; but natures immutable law brought them together and joined them in a *sangam* (confluence of two rivers). This fusion was a notable event in history. Since then destiny in her own hidden way began to fashion a new India in place of the old. We brought our treasures with us, and India too was full of the riches of her own precious heritage. We gave our wealth to her and she unlocked the doors of her own treasures to us. We gave what she needed most, the most precious gifts from Islams treasury, the message of democracy and human equality...

Eleven hundred years of common history have enriched India with our common achievements. Our languages, our poetry, our literature, our culture, our art, our dresses, our manners and customs, the innumerable happenings of our daily life, everything bears the stamp of our joint endeavour. There is indeed no aspect of our life, which has escaped this stamp. Our languages were different but we grew to use a common language, our manners and customs were dissimilar, but they acted and re-acted on each other and then produced a new synthesis. Our old dress may be seen only in ancient pictures of by gone days; no one wears it today. This joint wealth is the common heritage of our common nationality, and we do not want to leave it and go back to the time when this joint life had not begun...

"This thousand years of our joint life has moulded us into a common nationality.. This cannot be done artificially. Nature does her fashioning through her hidden processes in the course of centuries. The cast has now been moulded and destiny has set her seal upon it. Whether we like it or not we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible. No phantasy or artificial scheming to separate and divide can break this unity. We must accept the logic of fact and history and engage ourselves in fashioning our future destiny". (Moulana Abul Kalam Azad—Portrait and Prospect Hiralal Seth).

Moulana Abul Kalam Azad did not cease to be a Muslim by expressing such strong sentiments, nor do many other Muslims become renegades to Islam or the Muslim community by subscribing to the same beliefs. This speech sounds like a death-knell to Beverly Nichols' drawing room theories of a united Muslim demand for self determination through Pakistan and holds up a bright beacon for those in quest of the 'Indian'.

#### IV

The Parsi community admittedly one of the smallest in India, assumes a position of importance in view of its contribution to the economic and cultural life of this country.

Though they are mainly to be found in Bombay, Karachi, Gujrat, Ahmedabad and Multan, with a sprinkling over the wide face of India,

their influence over trade and finance are far reaching indeed. They are businessmen *par excellence* with a flair for public charity, which is difficult to emulate. They have donated parks, promenades, founded schools, hospitals, clinics etc, out of all proportion to the size of their community. They have in short set an example which the world might well follow for the kind of socialism practised by them will inevitably produce good dividends.

Since their arrival in India twelve hundred years ago when they fled from the tyranny of Darius of Parsia, they have become absorbed by the Indian nation, so much so, that despite their efforts to preserve their unity by such safeguards as marriage within the community and refusal to take converts into Zorastrianism etc. they have lost touch with their Persian culture and language. Their present official language is Gujerati, a dialect of the Bombay presidency. It would be ridiculous for any intelligent Parsi to assert or claim Persian nationality after a lapse of centuries and especially when they have nothing in common with the present Persian civilisation. I even make bold to say that less than a hundred can speak the Persian tongue or read Persian Script.

That they have amassed great wealth does not in any way rankle in the hearts of honest Indians, for they have achieved it legitimately through sound business acumen, wise regulation of expenditure, coupled with a capacity for hard work. They have been called the Jews of India,

but not one political leader of any community would dream of depriving them of their wealth, when "Swaraj" (independence) has been achieved, for Indians have not been smitten with any rabid anti-semitic phobia which has enveloped Nazi Europe. It would be as well as to reassure Beverly Nichols that his observation on our itching fingers for Parsi gold is completely refuted when we query how the Parsis happened to safeguard their gold or their quest for wealth before the advent of British Raj exactly one hundred and fifty years ago? Did the Parsis arrive with an armed escort to protect their interests? Or did the natives of this country with their much vaunted ability to see into future according to Hollywood and Elstree refrain from attacking these refugees, because they had visions of Western civilisation approaching the shores of India with their books of law and their guns to enforce them? It is a pity Beverly Nichols did not venture to hint in 'Verdict on India' as to what prevented these people from being victimised before the era of British Rule. The answer is simple to this Beverly Nichols riddle because they are Indians having helped to forge India's destiny and sharing the nation's sorrows and joys.

To give proof of their nationalistic spirit we can only humbly ask the author of 'Verdict on India' to digest the History of the Indian National Congress which boasts of many Parsi members, some of whom have even become its revered presidents. If his observations are correct regarding the Indian craving for Parsi gold then one can only suggest, in the light of evidence presented the whole Parsi

community should go down on their knees in gratitude to Beverly Nichols who has unselfishly opened their eyes to the Judases in their own community belonging to the Congress and they ought to commemorate "Verdict on India" by changing its title to "Things to come" (With permission of the author and apologies to H. G. Wells).

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Mr. Jinnah with his usual astute legal acumen has at last found a weapon whereby he wields considerable Muslim masses behind him in his quest for political mastery by his demand for Pakistan. Whether the arguments advanced in its favour can survive just criticism, is wholly immaterial. This partition scheme has given birth to any number of smaller "Stans" under every conceivable label and description to suit practically every community. Over night we have had thrust in our midst a number of communal leaders, who far from being original have raised their voice in a chorus to a tune composed by that Bombay lawyer the self-styled Quaid-e-Azam of the Muslim league.

One is unable at the moment to analyse the cause of this communal hysteria of the leaders. It may arise through a form of flattery, whereby imitation is considered the best expression, or it may be the old saying come to life again of the cry - Wolf! Wolf! Where one leads the rest will blindly follow; just to be in at the finish when Churchill chooses to preside over the liquidation



of this Jewel of the British Crown and with a flick of his erstwhile cigar generously hand back India to the ungrateful savages. They have a nightmare over the thought of the brilliance of their stars being diminished in the political constellation which would guide the destinies of a united India.

Fortunately for the bewildered masses of this country, Hinduism has absorbed such sects as Jainism and Buddhism etc or they would assuredly have had a few more champions foisted on their unwilling shoulders.

We have before us Khalistan another wonderful scheme of partitioning the motherland to provide a share for the followers of Guru Nanak, the Sikhs, the bearded warriors of world renown. Sikhism at its inception was purely a spiritual movement devoid of any political tendency, but as time went on, a series of incidents have forced its history into channels of an anti-Muslim character. Yet if its religious philosophy is subjected to a critical investigation one cannot help noticing the striking similarity it bears to Islam. In fact one might go so far as to define it as a Gurmukhi edition of Islam. To make the situation more complicated we find that Sikh sympathies both socially and politically are pro-Hindu, despite the virulent attacks on Sikhism by the Arya Samaj Section of the Hindu community.

Unfortunately for all these "Stans" their demands besides being illtimed and ill-conceived

are manifestly exaggerated. The religious aspect has been deliberately thrown into prominence to attract undue attention and whatever arguments are employed, they are intrinsically the product of a few self-seeking leaders' whom one can count on the fingers of one's hand, whereas the number of castes and creeds represented in the Indian National Congress suffices to convince the observer of the true trend of the masses.

## VI

Finally we come to Beverly Nichols' choice of the Christian in his quest for "Civis Indianus Sum". Here we are treading on solid ground in this controversy. Ground which is familiar to a large section of the reading public, since Christianity forms one of the bulwarks of modern civilisation.

Ironically enough we have Beverly Nichols' own story with which to prove that even authors are prone to err, and the pictures their pens paint need not necessarily be of the correct shade and colour or appropriate representation.

In order to marshall our facts let us analyse this story. He sits in a restaurant waiting for a friend to show him photos of the old churches of Goa. The friend arrives with a bandaged head to testify to the communal riots which take place in church because members of a higher community socially would not permit the cup of wine (communion) being handled by any member of the

community lower than themselves.. In this case we have a woman, (untouchable) 'Cherchez La. Femme', the theme still holds goods for Beverly Nichols friend) who was the cause of the trouble at Mass.

The salient points of this story helps us to arrive at the conclusion that the 'friend' was a Catholic and the violent benediction he received on his head took place in a Catholic Church. Confirmation of this fact is afforded by the use of the word 'Mass' and the photos to be shown of churches in Goa must have been Catholic Churches, as Goa is the cradle of the Catholic religion. Besides Catholics entertain quite a sentiment in collecting photos of effigies and churches, so we might safely presume the argument took place in a Catholic atmosphere.

Now that we have established him as a Catholic, it would not be out of place to suggest that millions of Catholics all over the world will volunteer the information that Holy Communion is administered in the Catholic Church by the priest in the form of a wafer called the 'Holy Sacrament' and that the use of wine for the public was abolished centuries ago.

The story supplies a comic relief to the pathetic attempt to foist his views upon a public without respecting their intelligence, for who would credit the farcical touch that the devotees even go so far as to indulge in a free fight to snatch the banners out of each others hands. What is more he has the effrontery to state that it is a usual occurrence

which happens all over the country. Even European Catholics would feel it incumbent on them to categorically deny a statement which belongs only to the airy regions of a fiction writer's imagination.

Suppose we allow the story a little more latitude in an endeavour to make it sound more consistent with the tone of his book, by conceding that his friend was a protestant and the incident occurred in a protestant church (Which is unlikely) where most of the communion is administered by wine. One is constrained to ask in view of his remarks on pollution how European members such as the I. C. S. and Subalterns in the army (complete with the Kensington accent) or the high and mighty Col Blimps would feel when drinking out of the Holy Cup after it had passed through the hands of a number of poor class Indian christian converts about whose personal hygiene and cleanliness they could only hazard a doubt. Their feeling of revulsion and reaction to the situation would indeed be a revelation. It would also show how deep is the influence of Christianity in its practical aspects. In all probability the European community would cease going to communion if it was subjected to such a lack of discrimination where the communion cup is passed around; especially to their cooks and sweepers who have been converted to the Christian fold.

I have been to churches where they have separate sections, but one can easily understand this, as it means that those who belong to the

European community could attend service comfortably and the Indian converts who found the bare ground offered a better position in which to sit through service certainly occupied that part of the church which offered those facilities. But there was no hard and fast rule enforced by the clergy as to which community should occupy benches or the floor. It was left to the discretion of the devotee.

I have yet to see a church done up with brass railings or enclosures to prevent a riot, so much so that one may be forgiven for taking the liberty of comparing the Christian church with a suburban bank or "Old Bailey". His description certainly reminds one of the latter.

If the above mentioned farces occur regularly in churches all over the face of India, one can only deplore the fact that Christianity has failed in its mission of properly influencing its converts. That its priests and missionaries instead of spreading the teachings of Christ of true brotherhood have sown chaos and confusion in the spiritual minds of the Indian converts.

Every Englishman who has spent some part of his life in India and has prayed to his God in the church of his choice will unhesitatingly declare the falsity of the stand taken by Beverly Nichols Christian friend. Europeans could offer irrefutable testimony to the spirit in which Christianity is revered and practised by the Indian Christian community.

A story like the one mentioned by Beverly Nichols is an insult to Christianity and a grave-injustice to that noble band of priests and missionaries who have unselfishly devoted their lives and their energies to the furtherance of Christianity and its practical interpretation. I agree with him that it is not a nice story and I even go further in saying that it is not even a plausible story. But it established one point very clearly that Beverly Nichols who spent one year in this country and whose proud boast of the benefits of Christianity over those of Hinduism, certainly did not attend any church during his stay, as every good Christian is bound to, otherwise the Cup of Christ would have received a very different write-up to the one in "Verdict on India"; which one may dismiss with an americanism that his friend was 'only handing him a line.'

Our quest for 'Civis Indianas Sum' is off. To be candid it was never on, because the first individual he set eyes on, when his ship docked in Bombay, who carried his luggage and safely handed him over to the howling crowd of taxi-drivers was none other than 'Civis Indianas Sum'. To deny this is tantamount to declaring that a Welshman or Scotchman is not a Britisher and in the broader sense English.

If one were to inquire in England of a British citizen born in the Isle of Great Britain his nationality, he would beside being astounded, reply that he was Welsh, Scotch or from Yorkshire, Lancashire, etc, because the obviously Bri-

· tish part of his heritage is beyond any question of  
 · doubt. So with the Indian. When in his own  
 · country his religious denomination comes first  
 because of its associations, but in a foreign coun-  
 · try he would first declare his Indian nationality,  
 as either being a Hindu or a Muslim would con-  
 · vey nothing to anyone living thousands of miles  
 away with no first hand experience of life in  
 India.

The light grows brighter "Civis Indianus  
 · Sum" is gradually emerging in all his glory, for  
 what else could inspire these various communities  
 but the knowledge of their truly great heritage  
 and the slow awakening to the broader view that  
 they are still Indians racially, culturally and  
 geographically.

Our quest is *not* for "Civis Indianus Sum" but  
 "Homo Sapiens", A man who would come to this  
 · country and give a disinterested commentary on  
 · India as it appears to him.

We have had numbers of Englishmen, who  
 have ventured to pose as authorities on India;  
 some with years of sojourn in this country to their  
 credit and others with less than Beverly Nichols  
 time for study, but they have ended in the same  
 strain of bias and guilty of looking at the East  
 through the rose coloured glasses of a western  
 mind, whilst straining their utmost to whitewash  
 British Raj and its Imperialism as best they could  
 despite the sobering effects of cold facts. Mr.  
 Beverly Nichols has written in the strain of some  
 "ex-officio" from White-hall deliberately turning  
 · Nelson's blind eye to the naked truth.

## VII

At last we arrive at Beverly's great decision to write his 'Magnum Opus' on the different countries called India. Not just a single country with that name but several heterogeneous countries labelled under a misnomer. We are grateful to him and his friend for demonstrating how easily the Western mind (especially that of a journalist) perceives this vital difference in the Indian outlook of deluding itself into the belief that India is one compact homogenous country with its variety of castes and creeds, ancient culture and richness of languages welded together by centuries of custom and tradition.

In passing one may hazard a guess as to what reception a statement would receive if Beverly Nichols' argument *par excellence* were applied to England or the United States of America. It would not lend force to the argument that England is not just one country because it is peopled by descendents of Romans, French, Gauls, Normans, Danes, Germans, to say nothing of the Welsh, Scotch and Irish. Or that the United States of America comes under the same heading because every country in the world has given its quota of nationals who with their descendents share the proud distinction of American Citizenship.

To proceed with the story, if it can be called a story. We have made another important discovery that India is a series of gigantic "No's" from start to finish. In short we are about to be



initiated into a new theory of a country having survived civilisation after civilisation from the dawn of history on a pure negative philosophy without any *positive* contribution till the present psychological situation of 1945 A. D. This is truly a case for the "Brains Trust of the B. B. C. or the Huxleys, not to mention Wells (H. G.) of "Homo Sapiens" fame.

To decide that not one of India's leading personalities in the political field have any really creative proposals except Jinnah, is not very surprising if it comes from an Englishman, for white-Hall has already decided that the barbarian is best. cared for in the Zoo of British Imperialism and Freedom to the native is just another excuse for chaos and anarchy. This unique piece of propaganda is swallowed hook, line and sinker by Britishers in this country and by a vast majority in the United Kingdom. So as people who stand condemned before a trial I trust we may be pardoned for not evincing surprise at such gems of thought from the Oracle 'Beverly Nichols' or the rank conservatism of the British Lion.

## CHAPTER III.

## Odds and Ends.

"Verdict on India reads like an inspector's report. A piece of work penned in a spirit of duty bent on detecting faults rather than praise for the virtues of India (if any). let us then accept the challenge in the spirit it is tendered in order to appreciate the value of the view-point of the author. He hardly spends ten minutes on Indian Soil when he sees his first typical skeleton horse limping and staggering down the road and eventually plunging into the gutter, a quivering mass of pain and sores. When faced with such a situation one is forced to wonder what the S. P. C. A. which boasts of an office in every city, could be doing, when a man travels six thousand miles and hardly disembarks for ten minutes before witnessing this sin against all common decency. Strangely enough the great proportion of people using horse—drawn vehicles come from the European and Anglo-Indian segment of society, and this being so, one is forced to conclude that they are either blind, callous or that the S. P. C. A. is a somnolent body to allow these pitiful creatures to ply for hire in their decrepit condition.

*14,00,000 Beggars in India.*

"There are 14,00,000 beggars in India, of whom 6,00,000 are blind, 2,50,000 deaf and dumb and 1,00,000 insane. These figures were mentioned by, Mr. John Barnabas, Organizing Secretary,

Social Service League, Lucknow in an address on the beggar problem.

Analysing the growth of beggars in India, Mr. Barnabas said the main factors behind it were unequal distribution, social disorganization, blind belief in fate, indiscriminate charity and disease.

Beggars of the modern type he said, were not a legacy of ancient India as man imagined. In the Varnashrama system of life, mendicants came into being who begged only for themselves and their gurus. Beggary was considered a form of discipline on oneself and not a public nuisance."

"The beggar problem we must admit is hard to accustom oneself to, but a close investigation reveals that they are the victims of circumstances rather than of choice. They are the descendants of beggars and their environments from childhood preclude any possibility of their improving their present status for several reasons. One of which is the low state of their mentality. Secondly their standard of living leaves their ill-nourished bodies unfit for any type of strenuous labour, which would in all probability provide the last straw to their earthly misery. One must also bear in mind the important part that the attitude of the public plays in their regeneration, for up to the present public reaction has manifested itself in a distinct apathy and disinclination to engage them in any form of domestic labour. One hundred and fifty years of benign British Rule have not eradicated this evil or ameliorated their condition and

Beverly Nichols has not even dreamed of raising the question "Why?" When methods of sterilization of the unfit have met with some success on the continent and some experiment on the lines of the Chinese Industrial co-operative movement could be employed guaranteeing positive results.

The story that beggars blind their children on purpose so that they may prove to be a source of future income in the beggar market, besides being well laboured has long since ceased to survive its purpose in impressing an audience whose imagination and credulity could be taxed to any point with tales of India. If this were true that maternal love could be so outraged as to earn a little extra money and that this could only happen in this country, then we must accord due credit to the Britishers in India and commend them for their bravery in entrusting their children to the care of Indian servants while they spend the best part of their lives in Clubs and Gymkhanas turning night into day and painting the town red. It must be their Christian spirit of Faith, Hope and Charity which indirectly influences their barbaric servants to keep on the straight and narrow path of western civilisation.

The British answer to the beggar problem is given full expression by Beverly Nichols himself in learning the practical significance of shouting the word "Jao". To quote Verdict on India "Here are the St. Vitus dancers real and bogus, some of them fluttering to a ghostly music in their own brains which will never cease till they die;

others twitching for profit; and here are the lunatics with spittle on their chins and the deaf and dumb patting their flaccid lips as they lean into your railway carriage. To these too, in the first few days you extend your charity. But the flock of dreadful beings that fly towards you, attracted by the clink of coins is too great; they seem to appear from nowhere, to drop from the sky and the trees, gibbering, spitting, moaning, screaming and pointing to their sores. You give it up. You know that the Hindi word for 'go away' is 'Jao' you say it reluctantly, you say it louder; till you find yourself shouting it. Then at last you have peace and silence. But it is a queer sort of silence, that seems to be filled with reproachful echoes." There we have in a nutshell the reaction of the British towards those unfortunates of India who are unable to earn a livelihood when the average income per capita is annas two or three per diem prewar.

It is easy to shout 'Jao' and shut these ugly episodes out of one's mind, but it reminds one of another story of the man who asked for bread and was given a stone instead of 'Lazarus and the Rich man.' How typical of the *English Christian of 1945*. It may here be argued that even an Indian would freely make use of the word 'Jao' in similar circumstances, but if one should take sufficient notice of the words used when a beggar is turned away, it is not the monosyllable Jao but "Maf karo" meaning "forgive me". One can only wonder at the contrast in expression and attitude.

One need hardly be surprised that the silence

seemed to be filled with reproachful echoes; for these people represent a human appeal for freedom from want; but these champions of liberty have learnt only too well the value of the word 'Jao' instead of directing their energies to removing this ghastly 'Prater fair of Vienna' through practical measures of economical reform. It might be of some interest to record the view of K. T. Shah in "The Economic Background" 'The Mass of humanity in India thus habitually live below the level of subsistence. In regard to the amenities of life, their position is hardly superior to that of the wild beasts of the jungle. The root cause is not so much in the steadily increasing population in India as in the lack of development of the country's inherent resources of agriculture and industry'.

## II

In Delhi Beverly Nichols received his first shock which caused him great social embarrassment. (Amazing how life in this country is composed of a series of shocks to the Englishman, who comes to earn a somewhat lucrative career as a soldier, engineer, doctor, administrator, or even as an author with such monumental works as "Verdict on India" for a criterion). If the words "Quit India" had that effect on every Britisher in India, (namely that of social embarrassment with a strong feeling of gate-crashing) the people of this country would be shocked. The boot would be on the other foot, for experience has taught us

that appeals and insults alike fall on deaf ears and nothing disturbs British complacency when handling the reins of power. They are not as soft-hearted as propagandists would have us believe or those ardent nationalists who languish in prisons all over the country would never have seen or felt at first hand the benefits of prison life for the prime sin of *Patriotism*.

He calls it an extraordinary situation, "A flaming insult!" an inducement to revolt! flaunted before the eyes of hundreds of people." It is really an ordinary situation for these reminders of our relative positions and aspirations in the political sphere finds no echo in British hearts. Its extraordinariness lies in the fact that a Britisher has the temerity to describe it as an insult. How could any sane individual subscribe to such a view-point when India besides being in bondage is not an Englishman's home in the patriotic sense of the word and particularly when British occupation is imposed on an unwilling nation of four hundred million people hungering for freedom through force, intrigue and machiavellian diplomacy? Where does he insult come in? One may presume to inquire when it is a legitimate demand. A nation's birth-right.

As for declaring it as an incitement to revolt, it certainly supplies comic relief to a desperate situation. One may inquire here as to what nature the revolt should take, or the type of weapons to be used especially when the Defence Port folio is in British hands and English Statemen have

seen to it that India is both unarmed and emasculated as a world power. The only course left open to the natives in this bloody revolt is to adopt Beverly Nichols satirical suggestions in India's defence position in "Verdict on India" by using catapults, barge poles and rotten eggs. The latter weapon would be of no avail against the British weakness for soap and hot water; ready to be supplied by an army of Hamals (general servant or waterman) a segment of the labour class unknown in the United Kingdom.

This farcial situation which put him in mind of Hyde Park and Britain performing another similar unconscious miracle in India by shaming the Volcano bears no similarity at all. The people who cried "Quit" in Hyde Park were *free* but those dumb millions who did not have sufficient courage to demand vocally their right, but wrote these words on walls and buildings like thieves in the night to show what feelings their natures harboured were still harnessed to the yoke of British Imperialism. Their independence a dream that has often been dangled before their eyes with specious promises that have no intention of being implemented.

The question of shaming the Volcano does not arise; it is purely and simply bare-faced mockery and though the words may be Robespierre's every Englishman can rest assured that the reaction far from being Robey's is also Robespierre's in spirit with nothing to soften the despair of the barbarian.



## IV

Shock number three. Viceregal Lodge with the Brobdingnagian nature of its surroundings; its retinue of servants dressed in liveries of white and gold certainly impressed the author, who has commented to some extent on Indian subservience in the Imperial household. (The pen of the literary circle has the power to provide invitations to Viceregal Lodge. A fact worth remembering).

We are advised on the life of the Viceroy; spartan living and mountains of work relieved only by the proverbial twenty minutes relaxation after dinner. The only omission is the salary which this august servant of the Empire received for his period of office, which was largely a record of "might have beens."

We are reproved for our lack of appreciation of his (Viceroy's) work and guilty of violating the elementary rules of etiquette by refraining from expressing a mere "Thank You" even when according to Beverly Nichols we are supposed to owe our safety to his iron hand in 1942 when anarchy was abroad and the whole country would have run with blood and the eastern ports would have fallen to the slit-eyed sons of Nippon, or is it satan?

Beverly Nichols has made a "prima-facie case of Viceregal outlook. How any one can reconcile this last statement with his heroic description of twenty five men from the Royal Sussex Regiment being more than a match for twenty five

thousand fanatics bent on killing and looting in the city of Karachi, is beyond the understanding of the layman. India is practically an unarmed nation, whose very native soldiers have sworn an oath of allegiance to the King Emperor for the sustenance they receive in return. Besides the standing British Army and the Prince's help in any crisis affecting British interests we are faced with the suggestion that the catapults, barge poles and rotten eggs of the Congress would have prevailed against this mighty array of tanks, guns and planes till the country flowed with rivers of blood and ended in the occupation of the eastern ports by the Japanese. I trust we barbarians would be forgiven for being unable to assimilate this indigestible piece of intellectuality, which has already informed us that one Britisher with a gun is more than a match for a thousand fanatics, or does this sublime reasoning intend to convey that it is another Christian miracle that rotten eggs and bamboo sticks are more effective than lethal weapons as much as the crossing of the Jordan or the blasting of the walls of Jericho with a trumpet. The only blood we can visualise in our flight of fancy is the Congress committing "Hara-Kiri" *en masse* or slitting their veins to provide the bloody part of Beverly Nichols far-fetched argument. In 1942 we presume he was in England when the threat of this historical reign of anarchy was about to be ushered on the Indian scene; How then did he judge the temper of the nation and particularly the Congress from a distance of Six thousand miles? Except through the kind offices of Fleet Street inspired by Whitehall or did he have in his

possession a political seismograph invented by Goebels or do we have to rely on a more practical and feasible explanation that he possesses the fortune teller's gift of second sight or intuition in anticipating events of which we in this country were blissfully ignorant.

To accept his suggestion that the splendour of the Viceregal setting is right and fitting, that it accords with India's history and anything on a more modest scale would be not only inadequate but artificial because the princes exist and that in itself is sufficient justification for the size and splendour of the Viceregal *menage* is to blind one self to the economic poverty of this country and live in a world of wishful thinking. To get a realistic view of the economic background let me quote K.T. Shah "Thus two thirds of the community get per head half the average income; while one per cent enjoy more than a third of the national wealth. The same thing stated in terms of the standard of living, show that the bulk of the population can hardly get one meal a day, and that too, of the coarsest and poorest. Against an average human need of 3,600 calories an average Indian can scarcely get 600; and that too without any regard to other needs of human existence and any other needs of civilised life."

The people go half-starved not because it is the latest Hollywood vogue, or a modern craze to preserve slim *petite* figures, or live on very low standards because they have been inculcated with ascetic ideals; but chiefly because they have not

enough to eat either in quality or quantity and their purchasing power is kept at its lowest, through the employment system obtaining in this country. Also a system under the aegis of British guarantees which privileges a bunch of despotic and autocratic princes to accumulate and enjoy a disproportionate share of the the wealth of the country. It would be churlish to declare the 'princes' as a British invention with the sole idea of bolstering their present rule. They have existed before the advent of the British, but the onus of their continued *outmoded existence*, despite their negative contribution to India's unity under the banners of democracy can be unhesitatingly laid on the broad shoulders of John Bull.

K. L. Gauba gives further testimony to this fact in His Highness "Among John Bull's various and diverse promises made from time to time, not the least important refer to the Indian States. Even as late as the 8th February 1921. Whitehall speaking through the King, who further spoke through an Uncle, reiterated to the princes "In my former proclamation I repeated the assurance given on many occasions by my Royal Predecessors and myself, of my determination ever to maintain unimpaired the privileges, rights and dignities of the princes of India. The princes may rest assured that this pledge remains inviolable."

Thus at one stroke the Princes of India have become one of the bulwarks of the Empire.. These privileges are further clarified by the same author "Suffice is it here to note that everything.

considered the average Indian State has a particular charm for the moneyed class of pleasure seekers, the world tourist, the cold weather pedagogue, the itinerant Duchess and the decadent Duke. Here free from the trammels of convention and the eyes of prying neighbours, rulers, officials, Sardars indulge in the most reckless forms of amusement, spending money like water in excesses, which have to be seen to be believed." Of the many factors conducive to these extravagances, not the least is a latent atmosphere of "it does not matter". In these slums of the middle ages, a man is known by the number of women he keeps. The history of a State is incomplete unless it is associated with its Voluptuousness, its Extravagance and Vice." (His Highness K. L. Gauba).

In contrast we have the other side of the picture by K. L. Gauba "But India is far from rich and prosperous, according to the standards of other countries of the world. Millions of peasants in India struggle through life on half an acre. Their dwellings are of mud. An incredible proportion live on one meal in the day. Their existence is a life long battle with hunger, ending alas! often in defeat."

If India were a rich and prosperous country as regards her economic development, there might be less ground for criticism of a form of Government which permits this extravagance of the princely order whilst hunger and disease stalk three fourths of the subjects under their rule. However dispassionately one might view this

anomaly there is indeed very little to support Beverly Nichols view that the size and splendour of Viceregal Lodge is necessary to uphold British honour and prestige at the expense of the people of India for a few hundred princes, who owe their privileges to the Paramount Power. It is this shortsighted policy which compelled Mahatma Gandhi to complain in his famous letter to the Viceroy "The iniquities sampled above are maintained in order to carry on a foreign administration demonstrably the most expensive in the world. Take your own salary. It is over Rs. 21,000 per month besides many other indirect additions. The British Prime Minister gets £ 5000 per year, i.e. over Rs. 5,400 per month at the present rate of exchange. You are getting over Rs. 700 per day, against India's average income of less than annas 2 per day. The Prime Minister gets Rs. 180 per day against Great Britain's average income of nearly Rs. 2 per day. Thus you are getting much over 5000 times India's income. The British Prime Minister is getting only 90 times Britain's average income."

"If the Viceroy gets 5000 times India's average income, what do our friends the ruling princes get for their custodianship? The Nizam's income is between 100,000 to 200,000 India's average income. The others are rateably in proportion.

world are any guide, the Indian Prince appropriates a sum many hundred times what other and more exalted members of the kingly order are permitted to do." (K. L. Gauba in his Highness)

Professor B. J. Vasvani gives us a better comparison of the cost of administration in India with other countries, in his book "India Explained."..... "The costliness of the British administration in India is seen from the fact that in a poor country like India, the Viceroy gets a salary of Rs. 21,000 per month, whereas the President of the United States of America gets a little over Rs. 17,000 per month; The Prime Minister of Great Britain gets one rupee out of every Rupees 100,000 collected in Great Britain, while the Viceroy gets one rupee out of every Rs. 1,000 collected in India. The salary and other allowances of the Viceroy are equal to the earnings of 20,000 Indians, that of the governors in the major provinces equal to the earning of 15,000 Indians each. Even the Chief Commissioner of Delhi gets Rs. 3,000 per month, whereas the Governor of Dakota (South) gets only Rs. 700 per month."

Beverly Nichols advances a very novel piece of information, to quote "After all Indian History until the arrival of the British was a record of unbridled despotism. India has always been a land of glittering palaces, surrounded by masses of human ant-heaps. There was never any middle class and no breath of democracy had stirred the Indian dust till we came". We are compelled to bring to the notice of this diligent student of Indian

History, who persists in the use of Nelson's 'blind eye' that India is still plagued with those glittering places filled with its play-boy princes, who delight in displaying amidst the human ant-heaps their fleets of cars hundreds of polo ponies, pedigreed race horses, dancing girls, scores of cabinet ministers, champagne parties and the costliest kennels in the world not to mention their pet weakness for sporting gold and diamond jewellery. All this with the kind permission of the British Government *and during their benign rule* (Historian please note).

It would certainly be interesting to compute what the annual expenditure of the princely order means in lakhs of rupees (Rs. 1,00,000 - a lakh) and see if it measures up to the accepted standards of democratic rule in its relation to the state revenue. It can only mean that the princes *still* rule absolute in their states as in the time honoured past utilising a despotic form of government which is abnormal in the world of today. A grim reminder of the crude form of politics which the rest of India has forsaken in her march with the times. If this is the gloomy record of 562 States (with the exception of a few well administered ones which have even outstripped British India in every field) a record of over 90 million



mundane existence the fact that the Clive did not wield a pen to write "A verdict on India" by the "Mercantile Adventurer". He could most probably have reconciled Royal proclamations guaranteeing the rights and privileges of the princely order with Beverly Nichols bally-hoo of Democracy of the twentieth century more effectively to the satisfaction of Mr. Mr. & Mrs. Smith in England and the barbarian in India.

(K. L. Gauba in 'His Highness') "In the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms the position of the States was described thus. "The States are guaranteed security from without. The Paramount power acts for them in relation to foreign powers and other states and it intervenes when the the internal peace of their territories is seriously threatened. On the other hand the States relationship to foreign powers are those of the Paramount Power, they share the obligations for common defence, and they are under a general responsibility for the good government and welfare of their territories." (His Highness). Here we have in a condensed form the uses to which this princely pantomime which the British found intact, could be put.

Not content with this theatrical metaphor of the British genius for taking a hand in the direction of the roles and plays of the princely pantomime, Beverly Nichols decides to drop another bombshell by introducing a tangent to the effect that Gandhi is not a sworn enemy of the Princes because of his declared determination to defend the princes and the land-lords by all means should

method of talking through one's hat, as we are unable to subscribe to the British delusion that the British overlord of all these glittering personages could not be housed in a small villa, or that the prospect of the Nizam of Hyderabad, the richest man in the world being ushered into a stuffy hall by a rumbling house-parlour maid besides lacking in artistic fitness is also decidedly 'un-Indian'. A recommendation here is most necessary to the author of "Verdict on India" to study the life and habits of the Nizam of Hyderabad before citing him as an instance, in a ridiculous argument which has been inordinately prolonged. But we could no longer be left in any doubt as to what is aesthetic, pertaining to artistic fitness or definitely Indian in the treatment of Princes regardless of their wealth if they failed to toe the line. 10 Downing street which is an unpretentious structure as compared with the splendour of the Vice-regal Menage would frame a very fitting reply to illustrate the strength of the British Lion, no matter where it may be housed either in the Imperial city of Delhi or the world famous Whipsnade Zoo.

ever any attempt be made to confiscate their property by violence. To emphasise his point he has put the words 'by all means' in italics. One can readily sympathise with these diligent students of Indian history at their bewilderment in following the maze of Indian events, but as a word of advice we must remind all future historians, Beverly Nichols included, that words by themselves have little value. To assess their significance on the times and the masses they are addressed to, it is essential to take the speaker's character into consideration. The world is fully aware of the life-long policy of Mahatma Gandhi and it comes as no surprise to hear him declare his intention to defend by all means the position and privileges of the princely order if they were ever assailed by violence. The emphasis now really falls on the words 'by violence' and this statement is fully consonant with the principles of this apostle of non-violence, to whom the use of force as opposed to reason and love is as repugnant as when he first started his campaign for the unification of India. In fact he would indeed be guilty of extreme folly in trying the argument of Force in the face of the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms, where John Bull has broadcast his interest in the Princely proteges.

In the meantime not even the most par-blind nationalist could claim that the splendour of their over-lord the British Viceroy is necessary when India's pressing problem is that of 'rupees, annas and pies' to keep the wolf from the door.

We in India have other views about the novel!

method of talking through one's hat, as we are unable to subscribe to the British delusion that the British overlord of all these glittering personages could not be housed in a small villa, or that the prospect of the Nizam of Hyderabad, the richest man in the world being ushered into a stuffy hall by a rumbling house-parlour maid besides lacking in artistic fitness is also decidedly 'un-Indian'. A recommendation here is most necessary to the author of "Verdict on India" to study the life and habits of the Nizam of Hyderabad before citing him as an instance, in a ridiculous argument which has been inordinately prolonged. But we could no longer be left in any doubt as to what is aesthetic, pertaining to artistic fitness or definitely Indian in the treatment of Princes regardless of their wealth if they failed to toe the line. 10 Downing street which is an unpretentious structure as compared with the splendour of the Vice-regal Menage would frame a very fitting reply to illustrate the strength of the British Lion, no matter where it may be housed either in the Imperial city of Delhi or the world famous Whipsnade Zoo.

## CHAPTER IV.

**The Bottom Rung.**

*"Ambedkar Does not Represent Harijans."*

"The President of the All-India Harijan League, Delhi, Mr. Mohan Lal Yatri, has sent the following telegram to the British Cabinet Mission and Mahatma Gandhi. "Dr. Ambedkar does not represent us. The elections have borne out this. The community has entire faith in Gandhi's leadership. Any pact with Dr. Ambedkar will not be binding on us." (Press Notice).

Dr. Ambedkar a man of about fifty, bulky, dynamic, very charming manners, but nervy, inclined to fiddle with his shoe laces.' In this summary Beverly Nicols failed to include the man's ambition. The ambition to become a political star of some magnitude. Men who are eager to sponsor and champion the cause of any community to the total disregard of the interests of the country as a whole can only belong to one category. The category of the men who are willing to betray the interests of the motherland in order to further their own position political or otherwise. The war gave a new word to Chambers Twentieth

• Surely such a brilliant politician like Dr. Ambedkar must be fully aware of the conditions under which Britain will part with power to the Indians. Whitehall has often declared that India once united would be in a better position to safeguard her own destiny. Can he in the face of this declaration state in all sincerity that India has his full co-operation in this direction? Even a child can answer that leave alone Macaulay's Schoolboy, who is supposed to be fully acquainted with the Hindu caste system,

Any individual who sets himself up as a champion of any cause other than that for the good of the country; who sets greater store on his caste, religion or community, rather than national heritage is supplying the masters of the Indian Country with the fetters which keep them in bondage. *Divide it impera* is definitely not of Germanic origin or the bright idea of Hitler's Nazi Reich. It owes its existence to the inspiration of British Imperial Policy which pays big dividends to pat these bright lads on the back, laud their efforts to vivisection India and pin decorations on their newly tailored coats, whilst publishing their names in the Birthday and New year's Day Honours List.

One may go on record by asserting that Dr. Ambedkar is not of the Cavour School of Statesmen—an implacable *realist*. Beverly Nichols must have got mixed up in his vocabulary, if he had inserted the word *opportunist* instead of *realist*, it might have made the picture clearer, for the Indian scene bristles with leaders of minor

stellar brilliance in the political constellation. How far he can be dubbed a realist can be gauged by the fact of his insistent demands for separate electorates that will inevitably label the sixty million Untouchables as apart from the Hindu fold and perpetuate their social status for all time. Not only is this demand ill-timed but also ill-conceived as it betrays a lack of national political acumen, which requires the renunciation of any sectarian or communal claim till India is free from the foreign yoke. Once Swaraj or Home rule has been realised would it not be easy for the "dynamic, creative and galvanic, Dr. Ambedkar (M.A. London High Honours Columbia University, Special distinction at Hedelburg)" to achieve his communal demands or the birthright of his solid block of sixty million backers, who could then be in a position to dictate their own terms, besides what chance can any Congress politician have against a man of Dr. Ambedkar's calibre when we have it on the good authority of Beverly Nichols that "when he speaks in public he is galvanic, creative and almost embarrassingly to the point. *To compare the average orations of a Congress politician with a speech by Dr. Ambedkar is like comparing a Hindu chant with a fusilade of pistol shots.*" (The italics are mine.)

This scourge of Untouchability is one of the drawbacks of the Hindu Social structure and find no place in the true conception of democracy, but to be dogmatic as the author of 'Verdict on India' as to set it down as "History's most flagrant example of man's inhumanity to man" is certainly tak-

ing more than a liberty with the Indian nation. If his choice of words so eloquently describe Untouchability it would be interesting to see what terms he would employ to describe Belsen, Buchenwald, and Nordhausen. These camps are in Europe the birthplace of present day civilization. We are not talkin of the past, but of the year -1945 A. D. These are not legends, fairy tales, true Detective Stories or tales of horror from the celebrated pen of Edgar Allen Poe. These are news paragraphs, stop press.

I suppose our kind friend Beverly Nichols who is keen on showing his gratitude to his one-time hosts the Hindus will assure us that these incidents could only occur in Nazi Germany where the animal in man has completely overcome his spiritual side. To this indignant outburst we have another trump card from another Oxford product's book. "Out of Dust" by D. F. Karaka, describing the Jallianwalla Bagh Massacre in the early twenties; he writes "As to what followed I quote from Sitaramayas" *History of Congress* which gives the authoritative Congress version "General Dyer entered the place at the head of a force composed of one hundred Indian troops and fifty British, while one Hansraj was lecturing to the audience, and gave orders forthwith to fire. His own version as given later before the Hunter Commission was that he ordered the people to disperse and then fired, but he admitted that he fired within two or three minutes of the order. In any case, it was obvious that 20,000 people could not disperse in two or three minutes



specially through that narrow outlet, and when 1,600 rounds were fired—and the firing stopped only when the ammunition had run out—the casualties were, even according to Government version, about 400 dead, while the wounded were estimated at between a thousand or two. The firing was done by Indian troops, behind whom were placed the British troops—all on an elevated platform, in the Bagh. The greater tragedy was, that the dead and dying were left to suffer the whole night without water to drink, or medical attendance, or aid of any character. Dyers' contention—as it came out later—was that the city having passed under the military, he had tom-tommed in the morning that no gatherings would be permitted, and as the people openly defied him, he wanted to teach them a lesson, so that they might not laugh at him. He would have fired, and fired longer, he said, if he had the required ammunition. He had only fired 1,600 rounds because his ammunition had run out. As a matter of fact, he said, he had taken an armoured car but found the passage to the Bagh would not admit it, so he left it behind."

"What else did Dyer do? He cut off the gas and electric supply. He ordered public flogging. He promulgated the crawling order by which any one wanting to cross the lane in which Miss Sherwood was attacked, had to crawl on his belly to do so. Third class railway tickets were not allowed to be issued. Not more than two persons were permitted to walk on the pavements. All bicycles were commandeered. A public platform

for whipping was erected. It was only worthy of of the days of the Inquisition. Yet to all of which came the reply "Your action correct Lieutenant Governor approves".

"What did Dyer have to say? As he sat before the tribunal of the Hunter Commission, self-assured and sheltered by the Act of Indemnity that was passed to legalise the atrocities he had committed, he was asked by Mr Justice Rankin the English Judge from the Calcutta High Court "Excuse me putting it in this way, General, but was it not a form of frightfulness?" It was a pertinent question from an Englishman, even though it was at the expense of British prestige. Dyer answered "No, it was not. It was a horrible duty I had to perform. I think it was a merciful thing. I thought that I should shoot well and strong, so that for anybody else, should not have to shoot again. I think it is quite possible I could have dispersed the crowd without firing, but they would have come back again and laughed, and I should have made what I consider to be a fool of myself "

It would be as well to note that reply coming from the lips of an Englishman who figured prominently in this tragedy. He deemed it merciful to kill 400 people when he could have spared their lives because he might be ridiculed. How must Christ have felt when faced with ridicule and insults, yet compare the action of this follower of Christ and the people who supported him with those of his Master who said "Lord, forgive them for they know not that they do", when his

life's blood was ebbing from his tortured body.

All this we are made to believe is not a flagrant example of man's inhumanity to man, not even the men who languish in the Indian prisons without a trial because they dared to ask for self-determination according to the well advertised concepts of Democracy.

How a little knowledge of recent history is necessary to understand the mind of an English Journalist. "This is not old stuff, but very new. It is as old as the hills and as new as the morning dew." It is a long way back in the grey mists of B. C. and it is also as modern as 1945 A. D.

Suppose we translate this Untouchability situation into western terms and analyse its counterpart the *colour bar* and see how the British emerge from this problem. The colour bar in South Africa is most acute, so much so, that Indians are denied democratic rights by the Pegging Bill etc., because of the hue of their skins and the country of their birth, despite the fact that India has sacrificed the flower of her youth in defence of the African soil against the Nazi hordes. How noble of the white element in South Africa to claim racial superiority over the Indian and yet shout from the house-tops the hollow sentiment of the brotherhood of the Empire and all that bunk of equal rights and equal liberties.

A Reuter Press Report in the Statesman dated London February 28, 1945, says "The

question of the freedom of movement of the Indians in the British Empire has been among the questions discussed at the British Commonwealth Relations Conference sitting in London, and a powerful appeal has been made for the removal of colour bar throughout the Empire". Might we inquire the necessity of a conference if coloured members received the same treatment and enjoyed the same privileges as the white man and there was no social disparity whatsoever. Let us now have the Indian reaction to this vexing question, Husain in the Statesman issue of the 25th May writes "The colour bar in South Africa cannot be compared to the disabilities under which Untouchables suffer. There is no bar to the Untouchables exercising the right of citizenship, they vote and are elected members to the legislatures, become members of Governor's and Vicéroy's Executives and blue-blooded Brahmins serve under them. Let these conditions be created in South Africa and Indians will not complain. South Africa is a pioneer of Nazi theory of the mastery of one race over others and deserves the same fate."

Everyone in India with some sense of fair play and justice, will unhesitatingly accord some measure of gratitude to Gandhi for his efforts in the field of social reconstruction and the regeneration of the Untouchables. Not one person will endorse Dr. Ambedkar's indictment as reported in "Verdict on India" that "*Gandhi is the greatest enemy the Untouchables have ever had in India*", unless he seeks to serve his own ends, whilst deliberately blinding himself to the truth. His articles in his

paper 'Harijan'; his fasts, and prayers for them, his photographs amidst them, are not a series of propaganda stunts to hood-wink the public of other countries.

He has sincerely striven to rend the veil of superstition and prejudice with which Hinduism is surrounded in the social field; and it is chiefly to his efforts that the scheduled classes enjoy such privileges as seats in the legislatures, temple entry, better jobs and favourable chances of receiving a good education. It is a one-man crusade against orthodoxy which has been tempered into utter firmness through centuries of tradition. A crusade to overcome the prejudices of 180 million caste Hindus and one has only to spend a few years in India to realise the magnitude of the task, which for ages has proved too strong for reformers of earlier times. It is easy for this Macaulay's school boy to levy criticism on a man who has achieved so much in his three score and ten years, probably he (Nichols) himself could have done better and earned the thanks of the street-hose brigade.

One is reminded forcibly of the difficulties which faced Jesus Christ, who is greater than any man on earth, in his mission of conversion and yet the world is not entirely Christian, but a collection of all the castes and creeds imaginable, including a large proportion of pseudo-Christians. One cannot say he was the greatest enemy of Christianity because he failed to convert the world. An argument on these lines is as absurd

'āś'if iś' ābstrue. Possibly it may pull its weight in Fleet Street, when it sees big names advocating it.

It might prove of some interest to Beverly Nichols and company to reproduce here a letter to his much vaunted Dr. Ambedkar in the Statesman issue of Lucknow, 11th May. "In an open letter addressed to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour member, Government of India the members of the U. P. Sweepers Panchayat accuse Dr. Ambedkar of "unsympathetic attitude towards the sweeper community."

"The letter says "we are much aggrieved that although you are reckoned to be the leader of the scheduled castes, which constitute about 60 millions in India, yet you appear not to be free from caste prejudice inasmuch as only the members of your own community (Mahars) and a few Chamars (Cobblers) have made much progress under your regime of membership in the Central Government.

"We had expected that a man of your education and power would have first tried to help the most depressed and down trodden caste the sweepers (Mehtars).

"*Worst Position* : This letter then enumerates the grievances of the sweepers and says "The unsympathetic and careless attitude which you seem to bear towards the sweepers, shows that in your schemes of new settlement for the scheduled castes, as proposed in your book entitled "Gandhi and the Emancipation of the Untouchable," you

will assign the worst position to them (sweepers) than the caste Hindus have already assigned to the Depressed classes in the villages."

"We can safely say that you are one of those who believe that there must be at least one community which may render service to the whole society and should remain where it has been since the beginning of its existence."

"Challenging Dr. Ambedkar to prove his sincerity towards the sweeper community, the letter asks him to persuade any member of the scheduled castes to vacate his seat in the Central Legislature in favour of a qualified one from the Sweeper community. "This gesture on your part" adds the letter, "will be a kind of positive proof, which will show that you really have a place in your heart for all other communities of the scheduled castes, including the sweepers, other than the Mahars and you can really be called an accredited leader of the scheduled castes as a whole".

"The letter requests Dr. Ambedkar to clarify his position as soon as possible."

"Copies of the letter have been sent to Mr. Churchill, Mr. L. S. Amery, The Viceroy, Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Jinnah, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and members of the Viceroy's Executive Council-A.P.I.

What these sweepers omitted to do was to send a copy to Beverly Nichols, the champion of Dr. Ambedkar. Meanwhile we may await a

new "Verdict on India" brought up to date with a complete summary of India's leading politicians *a sort of implacable realism.*

## II

Since we are advised by Beverly Nichols to seek Macaulay's school boy as authority on the four main castes in the Hindu fold. It would be as well as to inquire into this controversial subject to some extent in order to understand its complexities Sir Edward Blunt has given an accurate description in the Castes of Northern India; quoted by S. Natarajan, in Social problems of the caste system, he writes.

"A caste is an endogamous group, or collection of endogamous groups, bearing a common name membership of which is hereditary, arising from birth alone; imposing on its members certain restrictions in the matter of social intercourse, either

- (i) following a common traditional occupation
- (ii) claiming a common origin, or
- (iii) both following such occupation and claiming such origin, and generally regarded as forming a single homogeneous community."

Theory still holds that the origin of the four castes lies chiefly in the functions performed by its sects. The Brahmins performing secular and scholarly duties usually assumed by the clergy of other denominations. The soldiers and adminis-



traitors, come under the heading of Kshatriyas. Vaisayas were the merchant class whilst the Sudras formed the nucleus of the manual labour section of society. An offshoot of this lowest class is that vast army of Untouchables sixty million strong.

These classes were divided by no hard and fast rule and caste emancipation is no innovation to Indian society. To quote from social problems by S. Natarajan, says the sociologist Dr. Beny Kumar Sarkar, "The names of castes were not dropped. Acculturation to new institutions and ideologies was going on all the time, and yet the persons acculturated to the new *achāras* preserved their old caste distinctions. Both in physical blood as well as social manners, the contents of each caste disappeared or got modified and underwent perpetual transformation. But the caste as a covering title retained its formal identity during all these changes in substance".

Blunt also notes that,

"Constant intercourse in the course of business drew divergent elements together, and also separated them from communities of which they were formerly a part, till at last a new caste, occupational in nature is formed." This process still goes on at the present time."

What we intend demonstrating to the erstwhile author of 'Verdict on India', who seemed so anxious to expose this canker of Hindu society as

typical of the caste system found only in this country, that evidence is readily available to prove that states of society exist in other countries similar to the one he despises in his *magnum opus* and we offer these instances with the fervent hope that another chapter will be added to the Macau'ay schoolboy's syllabus.

The development of social organization in Iran in the earlier days was graded into three functional classifications. 'Atharvan, Ratharstar and Vaistriya relating to priests, warriors and the rest who bore a strong resemblance to their Vedic counterparts the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vasayas. Credit for the origin of the social graded orders is attributed to the Prophet Zarathustra. Later in the Pahlavi period we see the completion of the group of four orders. It is evident from the striking similarity existing between references in early Indian and Iranian sacred literature to each other and the fact that the name 'Hind' is of Iranian derivation that these two groups of culture have their common source in the Aryan race which separated as early as 2,000 and 1,700 B.C.

In India caste is more or less hereditary whilst it exists the world over in a more fluid state and that it is the blemish of every civilisation we have Patrick Geddes in his 'Dramatisations of History' pointing out that.

"These four great castes exist not only in India, but every other civilisation has more or less

developed, poor, and rich, labour and capital, these first two castes are the ones mainly developed in western lands by our industrial age; yet we also have been increasingly developing the culture-caste of the university; while our public schools have especialey endeavoured to provide a courage-caste, with its ambitions turned from gain towards an ideal rule".

In totalitarian States like Facism we see a strong resemblance to Hindu customs. The state controls labour and capital and fine distinctions of social duties, status, sex and education are carefully built up.

In England we have the fine divisions regulated by economy. The distinction between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. The Brigade of the 'Old School tie' which dine at Claridges and Dorchester and the huge army of working class who content themselves with fish and chips and while away their evenings in the local pub. In the colonies like India, we have the 'old school tie' or its substitute the patrons of Lyon's Cafe spending the best part of their lives in a continual baptism of whisky at the Clubs and Gymkhanas while the rank and file of Englishmen, not fortunate in securing the plum positions, content themselves with a life of obscurity, barred from membership to the exclusive clubs by their own white brethren from across the seas. No amount of propaganda will help to delude the public that these classes rub shoulders with each other socially and fraternise with each other at every public fun-

action. They are poles apart and will remain so despite the levelling influence of each post-war period.

It is fairly evident that Beverly Nichols whilst professing to be a devout Christian knows so little about his own religion which offers such good counsel as 'Motes and Beams'. If his only repertoire in writing assumes the style of caustic criticism, rather than constructive criticism, then we would suggest that he would receive more appreciation from his English readers by appraising the conditions obtaining in his own homeland before passing a verdict on the colonies.

In 'Verdict on India' we have the homely instance of the author experiencing considerable difficulty in getting any of his five servants to wipe up an iodine stain on the floor during the absence of 'Dido' the sweeper, who being an Untouchable could remove it without loss of face or caste. If one cannot credit the author for better sense we can at least commend him for attempting to lend justification for his point of view. A lesson he forgot to learn in his world-wide travels is the very elementary one that the world is composed of two kinds of people, The people who like to work and the people who like to see others work. It is an established fact that the majority of Indian servants are shirkers, and would welcome any opportunities to shift the onus of work on to other shoulders rather than perform the task themselves. Does Beverly Nichols or any Englishman really believe that every servant in India other than the

sweeper class has his own 'Dido' to clean up the mess in his own private quarters in order to escape social degradation. He usually does it himself or gets one of the members of his family to do the cleaning up for two reasons, one because he can ill-afford to keep a 'Dido' and secondly he has been doing his own chores from childhood. These excuses put forward by servants serve a dual purpose, it saves them from performing extra duties and at the same time affords employment for another individual.

Regarding his observation that heaven knows, that this episode may sound trivial, but when multiplied by millions it ceases to be trivial. It becomes a major problem, not only for India, but the whole democratic world. *It would indeed be a major problem to see each domestic servant complete with his "Dido."*

### III

Very briefly let us consider the life of the Untouchables.

It is *not* entirely a matter of negatives. It is true that they are subjected to a number of indignities such as the prohibition of the use of public wells, but it does not mean that they are deprived of the use of every well in the town or village and hence compelled to drink any filthy liquid they can find. To employ such an argument is to be guilty of taking it from the sublime to the ridiculous.

No. one, not even the most Christian minded European would feel like drinking or partaking of this meals if he knew that the crockery and the utensils had been handled by his 'Dido' who as Beverly Nichols admits is unutterably filthy and who has probably spent the morning tending the closets and done the scavenging of the town.

Formerly the Untouchables were forbidden temple entry. This was *not* the unkindest cut of all, as it was not tantamount to taking the faith away from a people so sunk in misery; the only solace they ever possessed. Surely in this modern age we are not deluded into believing that any individual who attends religious service regularly is the only one who can preserve his faith intact. Many such faithful worshippers are the biggest hypocrites the world has ever seen. They seek to cover their infirmities under a cloak of outward show. One can preserve one's faith without the empty ceremonial of figuring prominently in a selected place of worship. Faith is exemplified in every little action outside the precincts of a church or a temple. Since Beverly Nichols so carefully studied the life of the Harijan and observed such minute details as the night soil leaking on to the heads of his 'didos', it does seem strange that the symbols of their deities which adorn every 'tamarind' and 'pipal' tree in India escaped his attention. During his year's intensive study of this problem he even failed to notice the festivals they celebrated on holidays before their dieties thus giving the lie to his assertion that they had been deprived of their faith.

The temples were closed to them, till the Historic campaign of 1932 by Mahatma Gandhi. Since then several Indian States and Provinces have followed his noble advice and thrown open the temples to the Untouchables. This dramatic gesture force the orthodox to walk out of some temples in protest because their time honoured privileges had been violated, but with the passage of item it will be a common feature of Indian life to see the orthodox and the Untouchables lifting up their hearts in common adoration of their deity in the same temple.

Among other restrictions according to the famous author, the barbers may not cut their hair, nor the washermen wash their clothes. Then must we presume that his 'Dido' sported long hair like Lady Godiva and had a long flowing beard? Such a character would have suited a play of dark ages, rather than the role of a poor sweeper. Probably the retort to this statement can be supplied by the vast army of Mr. and Mrs. Smiths who loudly proclaim their love of fairplay. Let them inspect closely their 'Didos' and submit a report to this authority on India. He would be unpleasantly surprised to find that their clothes are washed by the washerman and as for their hair, they are clean shaven and boast of a hair-trim which compares more favourably with the tonsorial art as practised on Tommy Atkins, whose head looks as if it had had a pudding bowl placed on the top, while the finishing touches were executed with a knife and fork.

Some of the Untouchable classes are excommunicated Brahmin families according to Thurston in "*Castes and Tribes of South India*" who refers to the Nayadis of Malabar as the most despised for some breach of caste rules. (Social problems).

If the children of Untouchables are segregated from other castes in schools, it is not to be wondered at because of the difference in the condition of these children in regard to cleanliness. It serves no useful purpose for any Britisher to point an accusing finger at the Indians when they are guilty of the same sins. How many English parents allow their children to play with Indian children? How many English parents would countenance their children going to a school which allowed the children of the sweeper class to share the same desks as their wee precious mites, the future custodians of the Empire? Even if they were sentimental and Scotch the reflection that each one of the sweepers children was somebody's bairn would have carried very little weight in the attitude they would take up.

According to 'Verdict on India' this Hindu theory of paying for the sins of a previous incarnation is a convenient doctrine if one happens to have been born in the right bed-room. We can go a little further by saying its a damned sight more convenient doctrine to the Englishman, who hardly does any part of the domestic chores in this country. and we would appreciate Beverly Nichols explanation for keeping five servants in a small



flat including 'Dido' if the doctrine was not also convenient to him.

In the interests of hygiene alone it would justify anyone, Hindu or otherwise in taking every precaution when their health is at stake. The worst class of Untouchables, due to the conditions of poverty surrounding their lives know nothing about hygiene and care little for cleanliness. The filthy nature of their vocations has a tendency to make them disinclined to bathe, with the result that their bodies are encrusted with dirt, and vermin abound in their garments. When all things are taken into consideration is it any wonder that they are regarded with antipathy? We would like to see the 'great reformer' Beverly Nichols start a new campaign for the regeneration and emancipation of the Harijans from their lowly status by giving a personal example of breaking all precedent by having them share his bath, table and all other activities, covered by Christian principles. Then probably this lead would be taken up by his white brethren till the rest of India was smitten by the Beverly Nichols' bug.

#### IV

Let us examine those examples culled from the personal experiences of the author to help us realise the bitter struggle which these sixty millions must wage for the most elementary decencies, a struggle which was being carried on even whilst he was penning his momentous work. 'The Atlantic Charter' of the Harijans.

SCENE ONE. A British subaltern of the Indian Engineers, tired and depressed, confesses to the author over the ubiquitous glass of whisky his irritation at being unable to recruit some fine looking specimens, because they were Untouchables. The men under his command hearing of the proposed induction of these men into their units, threatened insolence, desertion and insubordination. In short a second Indian mutiny in the embryonic stage. In sounds grim that the rejected candidates shed tears over the situation and nearly broke the heart of the democratic subaltern. We are told that such instances could be multiplied *ad nauseam*. To enliven this drama we must quote the learned author in "Verdict on India", chapter entitled 'Stormy North'. "A people less wise in government than the British would have attempted to enforce the British Legal Code throughout the Wali's dominions. Obviously in theory, we should have done so, if India is a nation, every member of that nation should be subject to the same law. However, the British, who are always at their best when they forget about theories and trust to their sense of what is right, and expedient, have left the laws precisely as they found them."

The inference to be drawn from the above statement is either the British must be off form where the Untouchables are concerned, or if the administration is so full of wisdom and place such trust in their obvious sense of what is right and expedient, whilst displaying a marked characteristic to forget theories. Then we are obliged to query

in the face of all their 'well advertised' assurances *why such instances should be multiplied ad nauseam?* Also if the caste system is purely a Hindu or Pagan theory what prevented these Empire Builders from following their oft-proclaimed practice of forgetting theories, when the right thing to do in these cases is to recruit the Harijan in true democratic style.

'The Army' as we have already been given to understand to quote the same authority 'Verdict on India' is proving a powerful instrument in undermining the extreme caste system. Discipline, comradeship and above all a common sense of danger have worked wonders in the present war". If we are to accept the author as an indisputed authority on this vexing social question, then we have no hesitation in condemning the subaltern as a fool for not recruiting his live 'guinea pigs' to be tested in the melting pot of army reforms and thus seeing for himself the wonders this military crucible could perform, rather than disappoint these fine upstanding recruits.

If on the other hand British administration, which he considers the best in the world because it is based on wisdom, decided that the caste system in all its complexities is right and expedient coinciding with their (British) inherent sense of righteousness then the situation calls for no comment from the author, whereas if according to modern standards these ancient safe-guards are an injustice to the Harijans and an impediment to progress then Beverly Nichols is *championing a case of*

'lost causes' or indulging in a lot of ballyhoo about British administration which could be served up in the next three hundred years or so, as a classic in the same strain as Gibbons *"Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire."*

A story on these lines is hard to reconcile with facts owing to the conflicting nature of the versions put forward by the author, who eulogises the British aptitude for astute government and the miracles of the Indian Army, the melting pot of caste and communal culture on the one hand and on the other we have the subaltern's confession of insubordination, desertion and insolence because of the recruitment of Untouchables. It is a story that throws a great strain on the already confused mind of the barbarian, whose only solace for the Rs. 9/12 paid is that his British counterparts might make some sense out of the jig-saw puzzle called "Verdict on India".

SCENE TWO. An excursion to the village in a remote part of the south west, to a temple reputed to be of great beauty. The excursion was not a success for several reasons, one of which was that the temple was devoid of architectural interest for the ultra-modern Beverly Nichols. Secondly the display of phallic scenes at the base of the sculptures were too much for his aesthetic up-bringing. He could only see in it the resemblance of the most abandoned exhibitions aptly described by his caption 'Sex in the Gymnasium'. Whether it is the author's intention to portray clearly his impressions during the

excursion or if he is attempting to follow the footsteps of the American humorist Mark Twain, it is difficult to say, but whatever he has achieved by his portrayal it is certainly far from accurate. Theologians, philosophers, reformers and theosophists from the west such as Annie Besant and Andrews to name only a few have seen these temples, but their opinions have failed to reach the heights of imagination or abuse attained by this latest exponent of journalism of the western hemisphere.

The art of Phallic worship was cultivated further afield in the West. Evidences of this may be found in ancient Greek and Hebrew mythology which date further back than the dawn of Christianity, before it found a resting place in the boundaries of India.

On the continent many art exhibitions can provide sculptures complete with phallic organs which do not in any way produce a blush or cause embarrassment to the connoisseur of

must I put on the story of the Levite, who coming on his ass to the Benjamite town of Gideah, excited the passion of all the Gibeonites? He abandoned his wife to them, and she died the next day." Q 49. "Show me how to interpret the first fifty verses of the prophet Hosea? God explicitly enjoins him to take a harlot and have children by her. The prophet obeys punctually. He pays his respects to Dana Goma, daughter of Dom Diblaim, keeps her three years, and has three children - which is a model. Then God desires another model. He orders him to lie with another gay lady, a married woman, who has already deceived her husband. The good Hosea always obedient, has no trouble in finding a handsome lady of this character, and it costs him only fifteen pieces of silver and a measure of barley. I beg you to tell me how much the piece of silver was worth among the Jews"?

"Translated by Dr. Tamponet of Sorbonne. (The licentiate Zapata being appointed professor of Theology at the University of Salamanca presented these questions to a committee of Doctors in 1629. They were suppressed. The Spanish copy is in the Brunswick Library. He asked 66 questions, received no answer and was burned at Valladolid in the year of grace 1631)." (Selected Works of Voltaire).

### SCENE THREE

A dinner table in Peshawar - *Dramatis personae*, Pandit Malaviya and an anonymous leader of the opposition in the Legislative Council referred to

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On the continent many art exhibitions can provide sculptures complete with phallic organs which do not in any way produce a blush or cause embarrassment to the connoisseur of art.

Because his American lady friend characterised the sculptures as "definitely the Jain influence" he was pleased to pass it off as unwonted championship of the Religion of the Red light. How omniscient of the author, who would in all probability give us another appropriate substitute for the word Christianity after his thorough perusal of the scriptures which contain such passages as (The Questions of Zapata in Selected Works of Voltaire by Joseph Macabe Q. 34. "What gloss

must I put on the story of the Levite, who coming on his ass to the Benjamite town of Gideah, excited the passion of all the Gibeonites? He abandoned his wife to them, and she died the next day." Q 49. "Show me how to interpret the first fifty verses of the prophet Hosea? God explicitly enjoins him to take a harlot and have children by her. The prophet obeys punctually. He pays his respects to Dana Goma, daughter of Dom Diblaim, keeps her three years, and has three children - which is a model. Then God desires another model. He orders him to lie with another gay lady, a married woman, who has already deceived her husband. The good Hosea always obedient, has no trouble in finding a handsome lady of this character, and it costs him only fifteen pieces of silver and a measure of barley. I beg you to tell me how much the piece of silver was worth among the Jews'."

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### SCENE THREE

A dinner table in Peshawar - *Dramatis personae*, Pandit Malaviya and an anonymous leader of the opposition in the Legislative Council referred to



to as B—. The year 1933 marked with great excitement over a conference to settle the fate of the Hindu-Sikh minorities, hence the entertainment of the venerable Pandit by the anonymous host Mr. B—. The dinner was not a success because the Pandit besides being a Hindu was also a vegetarian and despite the new dinner service served with fresh fruit covered with skins, would not eat for fear of pollution.

This story has been told flippantly because it falls into the category of a farce. Even if the situation was translated into western terms with Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin and Chiang-Kai-Shek as the principle actors holding a conference replete with flit guns, towels, sprays and shower baths on Hindu lines as related in 'Verdict on India' the author assures us that it would be a miracle to get any business done and that half the war debt would have to be sacrificed on the altar of Krishna. |

The more one reviews these initial attempts at play writing, the more one is convinced that the author's bank balance could be considerably augmented by changing his present vocation of journalism over to dramatic play-writing. His genius for living *dramatis personnae* added to a colourful imagination could treble the royalties of 'Verdict on India', but apart from the realms of phantasy these plays look shabby in the cold light of logic.

If the venerable Pandit would not co-operate at the dinner it does not necessarily mean that all

Hindus are cranks about pollution etc. and that this refusal could be traced to this cause only. This view could not hold against the fact that vendors of all fruit, vegetables and purveyors of raw and cooked foods belong to every strata of society in India and the high class caste Hindu plays an insignificant part in the catering business. From the producer to the consumer the goods are handled by individuals of several different communities. No amount of white washing or propaganda will hide this fact, and if we are to believe that the caste Hindu is so strict in the observance of his religious customs in regard to diet, personal habits and social intercourse, then we can accept it as a fact that a live caste Hindu would indeed be a *rara avis*, a modern oddity. Long train journeys over the face of India compel the passengers to eat and drink together irrespective of social position or creed. Public conveyances such as buses and trams force them to rub shoulders with each other and share the discomforts in a common spirit.

The author after giving us a vivid picture of the Pandit's foibles as typical of the attitude of his caste brethren towards the Untouchables of any other community goes on to say that he (Pandit Malaviya) has taken up cudgels on behalf of the Untouchables in their battle for social emancipation. In spite of all these proofs before the eyes of the *avatar* Beverly Nichols, we have the sublime plays from his pen to show the impracticability of the Hindu communal outlook.

As for the last war debt probably Beverly Nichols would be gracious enough to inform us on what lines the conferences at the League of Nations in Geneva were conducted since war debts went in default and international obligations were not fulfilled to the letter. - We can only surmise on what altars the balance of the war debt was sacrificed. It was certainly *not* on the altar of Krishna.

## V

In "Verdict on India" chapter III, "Below the Bottom Rung", the reader experiences considerable difficulty in following the almost superlative type of reasoning expressed by the author. Whether this psychology is common to every Mr. and Mrs. Smith, who embarks weekly on the modern 'May Flowers' bound for India through the agency of the Pand O Steamship Company, or is the sole peculiarity of Fleet Street journalism it is hard to say, but for the sheer inconsistency it rivals the capabilities of the third German Reich.

The few quotations given below from his chapters will enable us to realise the immensity of the task ahead of the average reader in following the author's contradictory statements without incurring the risk of mental collapse or brainstorm.

According to his classic:

"Gandhi is the greatest enemy the Untouchables ever had in India." He evidently endorses the quoted opinion of Dr. Ambedkar by writing: "Untouchability - History's most flagrant example-

of man's inhumanity to man is still deeply rooted in the Hindu social system; nearly all attempts to abolish it have met with failure. If a ten per cent improvement has occurred in the last fifty years, that is an optimistic estimate. A large number of people in England and America deluded by Gandhi's propaganda, imagine that this disease - for what else can you call it? - is on the wane. They have read with approval the Mahatma's denunciations of it, they have seen photographs of him with his arm around the shoulders of out-castes, and they know he gave the title of 'Hari-jan' to his own newspaper, which circulated among the high and mighty of the land. 'Surely they say to themselves, such a powerful example in these enlightened days must have some effect?' It is not. As for Gandhi being the Untouchables friend, let us listen to Dr. Ambedkar, who is their indisputed leader. He said to me:"

'Gandhi is the greatest enemy the Untouchables have ever had in India'.

"A little knowledge of recent history is necessary in order to understand this accusation".

Later in the same chapter - "This will come as a violent shock to most people. Gandhi has ceaselessly proclaimed his detestation of Untouchability. He has the Untouchables in his ashram, he has adopted an Untouchable child, and he has declared 'I would rather that Hinduism die than Untouchability live'. This often-quoted remark, by the way, does not really make sense. Untouchability is as integral a part of the Hindu

faith as anti-semitism is of the Nazi: begin by destroying Untouchability and you will end up destroying all caste. And caste is the only cement which saves the incredibly complicated Hindu structure from collapse. None the less, Gandhi was probably sincere when he spoke".

It would be as well to take note of the last sentence.

The often-quoted remark "I would rather that Hinduism die than Untouchability live", *does make sense* to any one with an unbiased mind. Since 1932 he has taken his stand against orthodoxy to break the caste system, which makes so many unnecessary distinctions within the Hindu fold. It would be ridiculous to credit that Untouchability is an integral part of Hinduism and to begin destroying its incredibly complicated structure would be tantamount to bringing about the collapse of Hinduism both in its religious sense and its practical interpretation in the social field. Reform in any religion does not necessarily destroy its fundamental basis or destroy its inherent character in such a manner that its original identity is completely lost. If this is held as a strong argument against the reform movement in Hinduism, then one is justified in concluding in the same ridiculous fashion that Protestantism is not Christianity because originally Christianity was spread in the form of Catholicism *only*. This reform movement should meet with the approval of the British who claim that empty privilege of equal

rights and liberties for all men, the encouragement should come in another form rather than 'Verdict on India'.

Again we have the author that "C. R. Rajagopalachari, Ex-president of the Congress and the chief link between the extremists and the British, is also a Brahmin so is Pandit Malaviya, the leader of the extreme right wing of Hinduism. So are most Congress big-wigs". Again,

"Congress dominated by the Brahmins has no intention of changing the situation. It is highly significant that by far the most sweeping measure to improve the lot of Untouchables have been made in the state where the Congress writ does not run. Mysore, for instance, could set an example to the whole of India".

And in the same chapter :

"Nevertheless, Malaviya in spite of these foibles is entitled to our respect. Extreme Hindu as he is, he has fought the battle of the Untouchables and admitted hundreds of them into the Hindu fold. That proves that his heart is very much in the right place, for only a deep love of his fellow men could make him challenge the faith of his fathers. He starves himself for that faith and yet he takes up cudgels for those whom the faith has made pariahs. It would be ungenerous to deny that he comes out of this story pretty well."

Again: "Admittedly one or two dramatic gestures have been made in the past few years by enlightened rulers and statesmen who have thrown open the temples to all comers. But what happens? As soon as the Untouchables flock in, the orthodox

flock out." "The classic example of this tendency was afforded by the great temple at Madura 300 miles south of Madras. Premier Rajagopalachari went so far as ordering a government official to lead a group of Untouchables into the temple. The great majority of Brahmins have refused to set foot in it ever since."

The same names Pandit Malaviya and C. R. Rajagopalachari cited as typical Congress members who wish the status of the Untouchables to remain unchanged and yet the author has sufficient nerve to narrate the same men's experiences in their fight for the Untouchables' cause. In truth it is not the Hindu caste system which is an incredibly complicated structure but an English journalist's or author's thinking apparatus which defies all description.

Further in "Verdict on India" the Congress is dominated by Brahmins and it also gives us the irrefutable fact that Gandhi is a 'Vaisaya', a member of the trader class. If we are to believe that Gandhi has laboured for several decades to bring a predominantly Brahmin Congress into power to exploit the lower classes and that there are thousands of Gandhi's in the bazaar bent on performing the same miracle, then we can be excused for believing that either 220 million Hindus are lunatics or that the author has been supplied with the wrong pair of rose-tinted glasses.

According to Beverly Nichols and his friend Dr. Ambedkar, Gandhi has done nothing to improve the position of the Untouchables; and yet

he writes that Gandhi who is the virtual dictator of the Congress fraternises with the Untouchables, lives with them in his Ashram, adopts a Harijan child and declares that he would rather 'Hinduism die than Untouchability live'. If he is so confused in the prosecution of this problem it would be as well to quote another author, an Englishman, who has made a study of the great reformer's (Gandhi) life and see what he has achieved for the out-castes.

T. Weber in his book 'Gandhi', writes : 'Considering it an internal problem of the Indian masses, the Government thought that it would be best to deal with them as a separate community.'

"Gandhi who received regular reports in prison, understood the meaning of these provisions. To his mind the British government wanted to help Indian feudalism to maintain another one of the class and caste distinctions which were the curse of India. It was also against Gandhi's declared policy of treating the Untouchables just like any other section of the Indian population. To work for 40 million Untouchables was just as holy to Gandhi as his movement for *Khaddar*. Improvement of the position of these people was to revolutionise one fifth of the world. No movement in the West could be compared with the movement for the rights of the depressed classes in India in view of the thousand year old associations of the rights of these classes with the ruling religion of the country. Gandhi at once recognised the opportunity for a substantial improvement of the lot of these miserable classes by forcing the govern-



ment to admit the Untouchables into the political community of India on absolutely equal terms."

So to force the Government's hand he started 'a fast unto death' in Yervada Jail at Poona. "I claim," said Gandhi, "That my life now - whatever remains of it - is a hostage for the removal of Untouchability". In a letter quoted by C. F. Andrews, Gandhi wrote "The conception of giving my life for the Untouchables is not of yesterday. It is very old. There was no call from within for many years. But the British Cabinets' decision last August, came like a violent alarm bell awakening me from slumber and telling me: This is the time. It therefore provided the psychological moment, and I seized it..... In reality it covers the very things you would die for and live for - one and the same thing in essence. For he who sees life in death and death in life is the real seer. It may be this is my last letter to you. If I die, I shall die in the faith that comrades like you, with whom God blessed me, will continue the work of the country - which is also the work of humanity - in the same spirit where it was begun... Meanwhile pray for me, that God may give me enough strength, to walk steadily through the veil. If Hinduism is to live, Untouchability must die... If the interests of the country are to be one with those of humanity, if the good of one of the faiths is to be the good of all faiths, this will come only by the strictest adherence to truth and non-violence in thought, word and deed."

On the seventh day of the fast the British Government agreed to accept the electoral compromise between the Untouchables and caste Hindus.

T. Weber sums up the results of this "Fast" movement which moved from the rational to the emotional plane. "The Pact of Poona was signed by four high caste leaders of the Hindus, Malaviya Raja, M. R. Jayakar, Sir Tej Saprú, and Raja Gopalachari. The Depressed classes were represented by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar a graduate of Columbia University and Mr. M. C. Raja. After the signing of the pact Dr. Ambedkar and Raja Gopalachari exchanged pens, Dr. Ambedkar who was for many years a violent anti-Gandhiist afterwards embraced the feeble Congress leader," (Beverly Nichols please note.)

"The agreement drafted by Gandhi's secretary on instructions of the master:

"Part one of the pact fixes the number of seats apportioned to Untouchables in the Provincial Legislatures at 148 instead of 71 as in the previous Government award.

"In the Central Legislature Gandhi insisted that eighteen per cent of the reserved seats should be placed at the disposal of the Untouchables. The original Government scheme only allowed for four per cent.

"Methods of election were fixed in the Pact, one of the provisions being for a primary election

at which four Untouchables shall be elected as candidates. One of these four candidates is to be selected by an electoral college composed of both Untouchables and caste Hindus to contest at the general election.

"Part two provides that the reservation of seats in the Provincial Legislatures shall continue until further mutual settlement can be reached. The primary election method will cease automatically at the end of a decade, if not terminated by mutual accord earlier."

"The *Free Press of India*, hailed his achievement as a triumph, "Gandhi has achieved a miracle. He has brought 40 million Untouchables into purified Hinduism and has enabled 250 million united Hindus to support Indian Nationalism. The pact is a triumph for Gandhi on every front moral, political and social."

The Daily Telegraph expressed the view that:

"Gandhi's directing his threat towards the British Government was one of those freaks of Gandhian mentality which always has made it so incalculable as an influence in Indian affairs. It looked at first like a mere piece of tortuous insincerity. But the device has not for a moment blinded the Hindu community. They perceived that it was upon them that the pressure was being applied. Their leaders acted with all promptness and the settlement was produced there through concessions by both sides. But the overwhelming balance of the advantage is, as it had to be on the

side of the Untouchables. It has given the British Government what it always has earnestly appealed for, an agreement among the Indians to replace one which it had most unwillingly devised itself. There remains the question as Gandhi himself perceives, whether the part of the caste Hindus will be carried out in the spirit of the negotiators of Poona. The social habits of a thousand years can hardly be uprooted in a week, but the institution of Untouchability certainly received a staggering blow and one that may prove fatal."

A few days after the pact he gave out the call "Go to the Harijans, sweep their roads, enter their huts and wash their children".

The pace of progress can be expected to grow more rapid now that more leaders from within these classes are coming forward. The Hindu community as a whole is now intellectually convinced that Untouchability must go, and despite opposition from the conservatives it will in time be completely abolished provided no concession is made to Ambedkar's claim of separate electorates. "Is it any wonder that Gandhi after all his sacrifices politically and socially fiercely opposed the scheme of separate electorates, which he rightly condemned as a measure of ensuring the perpetuation of Untouchability?"

In his letter to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, he wrote from Yervada Jail in Poona, pointing out that the proposal of separate electorates was threatening to

drive a wedge between Hindus and Untouchables. "I sense the injection of a poison that is calculated to destroy Hinduism and to do no good whatsoever to the Depressed classes."

Another prominent socialist Mr. K. Natara-jan in 1927 addressing the Indian Social Conference in the role of President declared that the only final solution of the Depressed classes problem was the abolition of caste "so long as there is caste, there must be out-castes".

Associated Press of India in a dispatch of July 13th states "Presiding over the inauguration of the Padmanabharas Memorial Harijan Home at Nidubrelu, providing a hostel, and occupational training facilities for Harijan students, Professor N. Ranga said he would challenge Dr. Ambedkar to face an impartial international tribunal and justify his charges against Mahatma Gandhi regarding his work for the uplift of Harijans.

"Professor Ranga said that Gandhiji's second fast for 21 days in 1931 was specially intended for furthering anti-Untouchability work. He also maintained that Gandhiji had secured more seats for the Harijans through the Poona Pact in the Legislatures than his detractors ever tried to secure through their efforts. Moreover the Congress had appointed Harijan ministers in Bihar and Madras besides giving them other responsible positions elsewhere."

Professor Ranga added "*Gandhiji is the greatest benefactor the Harijans ever had.*"

Mr. B. S. Murti Ex-Parliamentary Secretary of Madras inaugurated the house.

## VI

We have been discussing at some length the problem of the Harijan. It would be of some interest to inquire into their origin and see for ourselves how this vast number of 60 million people happen to be in this unenviable position. One of the most feasible explanations for their origin is put forward by T. Weber "The Untouchability is in reality nothing else but a colour bar since the aboriginals who are the ancestors of this class are of a darker complexion than the lighter races which entered India from Central Asia and eventually became the high-caste Hindu classes. As the subjection of the original inhabitants was completed they were made to perform certain menial occupations which were regarded as pollution by the high-caste Hindus. Thus the whole race became polluted in the eyes of the caste Hindus, and the gap between the Depressed classes and the high-caste Hindus became wider and wider as the wealth of the latter grew and emphasised the lawlessness of the outcastes". How far this theory in regard to the origin of the Untouchables can survive closer investigation in the light of history one is unable to say but it certainly furnishes a plausible explanation.

Beverly Nichols' Query 'What of the future?' is certainly out of place. He declares that the future depends largely on the British, whether they wish to knuckle under the demands of the Congress, in which case the state of the Untouchables will remain stationary or deteriorate, an entirely intolerable situation or to quote his brilliant observation on British generosity to lend their support to Dr. Ambedkar he says; "It is not always in British history that the path of honour is identical with the path of self-interest, but that is the situation in India today. There is only one path that we should tread for our own sakes and for the sake of the under-dog. Let us hope we tread it."

One is entitled to ask why the British did not tread the path of honour earlier? Surely the underdogs were very much in evidence even before Gandhi took the revolutionary step for their emancipation. Also if their solicitude for the underdogs is so great why then have they not taken steps for their amelioration, when even Beverly Nichols finds their position intolerable in the year of grace 1944 A. D.? If it takes John Bull two centuries to wake up to the pressing problem of the Harijans then we can safely presume it will take another couple of centuries before he vindicates his honour and treads the path lighted by that pioneer "Beverly Nichols".

He condemns Gandhi's much vaunted new approach as abortive despite his soulful proclamations by inquiring how many Untouchables have managed to obtain University degrees? He pro-

ceeds to answer it by stating five hundred! "Five hundred in the whole history of Indian Education, in a country with a population of nearly four hundred million!"

This staggering discovery would pass muster if 'Verdict on India' were dedicated to the mental asylums in the world. To anyone but a fool this reasoning emulates anything Dr. Goebbels ever attempted in his short career. The total number of Untouchables as enumerated by the author is 60 million, then instead of telling us that five hundred out of 60 million have obtained university degrees he tries to sound impressive by raising the total to 400 million. At one stroke of the pen he has turned the population of India into a vast camp of Untouchables. Bravo Reverly, you could not have done better. It would be an eye opener to this erstwhile critic to quote Rabindranath Tagore's trenchant reply to Miss Rathbone's open letter to Indians—"Through the official British channels of education in India have flowed to our children in schools not the best of English thought, but its refuse, which has only deprived them of a wholesome repast at the table of their own culture".

"Assuming, however, that the English language is the only channel left to us for 'enlightenment' all that drinking deeply at its wells has come to is that in 1931, even after a couple of centuries of British administration, only about one per cent of the population was found to be literate in English. While in the U. S. S. R. in 1932 after only fifteen years of Soviet administration 98 per cent of the



children were educated (the figures are taken from the Statesman's year book, an English publication, not likely to err on the Russian side)."

In its proper perspective 500 university degrees for the Untouchables out of a total of one per cent or if progress is taken into account, 4 per cent, for the whole of India is a commendable ratio and a great encouragement to the reformers, whilst it shows up the mathematical genius of the 'old school tie' which solves its problem through Machiavellian psychology.

We can set the author's qualms about the future at rest by quoting a press notice in the Daily Gazette issue dated July 3rd, 1945, reported by Associated Press of India in connection with the Simla Parleys to end the communal deadlock in India and select an interim-Government with an entirely Indian cabinet. "Mr. Frank Anthony, the Anglo-Indian Leader commenting at New Delhi on the reported intention of the Congress Working Committee to include all the minorities in its list of candidates says in a statement:—

"This has come as a welcome gesture to the minorities. I have already made it clear in a previous statement, that I would like to see the Executive Council selected without any regard for communal labels. But since communal representation appears to be the only solution to the problem, for the present, this liberal policy of the Congress will go a long way to assuaging the fears of the smaller sections of the people, which are

the root cause of communalism, and to getting them to work together for the common good of the whole country. The action of the Congress will advance the cause of Indian unity immeasurably".

We are warned against the Congress and its leaders the Brahmins. A fact that we are to bear in mind that caste plays the same role now as it did in the distant past. For the author's enlightenment we are compelled to quote S. Natranjan in Social problems he writes;

"If developments like these help one better to understand the Indian Social system, nevertheless today, whatever might be the process of social evolution in other lands, it is largely true that caste has broken down in Indian cities. This can be seen from numerous instances of men and women pursuing occupations outside those indicated by their hereditary castes." Mr. T. N. Ramaswami in the Economic Problems of India, remarks of the Brahmin alone:

"The Brahmins...In urban areas all over the country have no occupational distribution; they follow liberal professions like law, medicine, teaching and most important of all, Government Service. Some Brahmin Classes are landowners... In some cases the Brahmins have become farmers. Incidentally we also come across Brahmin criminal tribes like the Tagris on the upper Jumna".

His recommendation that British support

should be accorded to Dr. Ambedkar rather than Gandhi, the caste Hindu, because the former who has risen from the depths and fought his way through a ceaseless barrage of insult and superstition, to emerge triumphant as the champion of his people, is worthy of attention, but John Bull has good cause to remember the potentialities of men who rise from the depths. The lesson of the last six years gives irrefutable proof of the wisdom in backing the safe bet though the dividends are insignificant.

A word of advice to the author would not be out of place, in the event of his decision to pen a revised version of his monumental work 'Verdict on India'. He was so keen on criticising Indian artists for slavishly imitating Ajanta frescoes and the Moghul and Rajput Schools, so much so that young India was staring fixedly into the past, that he himself is guilty of the same error in his chapter "Below the Bottom Rung", in which he was utterly incapable of concentrating on the present. A worthy disciple of the christian lesson of 'Motes and beams'.

## CHAPTER V.

## A Postscript to Lessons in Bed.

"Pain should be the daily and nightly preoccupation of the politician; it lies at the beginning and the end of every road; it is the pain of the soldier that we should remember when we are balancing the scales of war and peace, and the pain of the hungry when we are making our budgets. Yet the trend of politics is more and more impersonal. We wax so passionate about systems of book-keeping that we forget that behind the figures there are faces. It is a long step from Wilberforce to Keynes, from Dickens to Beveridge." With this brilliant observation Beverly Nichols gives us the interesting data that there is one nurse to 65,000 Indians worked out on the basis of population. The surprising part of this astounding fact is that it takes practically two cataclysmic wars before a Britisher realises the appalling conditions obtaining in the medical side of India's present social system. If as the author points out that it is gruesome and in a strange way humiliating, and questions the right of a patient in his condition engaging two nurses when 65,000 stood in dire need of one; It might have seemed shameful to be lying in bed under a bell, which would summon a nurse who was needed by 65,000 people in pain, but these sober reflections in no way interfered with the selfish arrangement already made, namely submitting to the sole and exclusive ministrations of his two nurses. In com-

mon with his vast brotherhood of well-to-do Europeans and the rich upper strata of Indian society, these reflections seldom, if ever, influence their decision to avail themselves of the best that the medical profession in India can offer, even though their complaints are mere colds, septic throats or the removal of bunions all belonging to the category of minor ailments. They do not make heroic decisions of sacrificing their need of one or both nurses in the interests of the helpless millions of India. His view-point bears a strong similarity to the man who gorges himself with the choicest viands the country could provide whilst reflecting on the misfortune of millions all over the world, who are unable to get one square meal a day. Apart from setting down these statistics and the reflections they engendered one might inquire what steps he had taken to ameliorate this condition or if on reading his verbose and revealing treatise Leopold Amery initiated some form of medical reform? The only change we can see that has been occasioned by his brilliant observation is that whilst the medical backwardness remains static the royalties of 'Verdict on India' accrued considerably.

There may be more sheer pain to the square mile in India than in any other part of the world, but the thought of it seems to keep very few people awake at night *especially Mr. and Mrs. Smith*. India's backwardness in the medical services *cannot* be attributed to the Hindu doctrine of Karma to any degree however infinitesimal, as is *fallaciously stated by that authority Beverly Nich-*

ols, for if this callousness were due to the Hindu Karma, how does he explain away the lack of direct contribution to the nursing profession by other communities (except the Anglo-Indian minority), who form nearly 42 per cent. of the total population of India. Also if this doctrine of Karma prevents the recruitment of Hindu Florence Nightingales how can he account for the thousands of Hindu doctors whose practice boards are displayed in every city. Surely the doctrine of Karma must also apply equally to the male section of the Hindu community? Or are we to presume in the dilettante fashion of *Nicholism* that if this vast army of doctors come from the Hindu fold, they must be proteges of Dr. Ambedkar?

The Hindu doctrine of Karma is given a new definition by Beverly Nichols. Whether we are to place any credence on this masterpiece of presumption and fallacy, or accept the proper interpretation in relation to facts, is left solely to the intelligence of the reader. We are told "If you believe that a child in pain is merely paying for its wickedness in a previous incarnation, why should you pity it? Pity plays a very small part in Hindu Philosophy."

Forbearance and pity are the inherent qualities of Hinduism, and to state that pity plays a very small part in Hindu philosophy will never alter this basic fact regardless of whether it comes from the lips of an oracle from England or an agnostic. *All religions preach love in its altruistic form of which pity forms an integral part for human weaknesses.*

Probably the inheritors of the traditions of the East India Company can testify to the philosophy of their Hindu servants, but if Mr. and Mrs. Smith care to believe this piece of Nicholism then they can do no better than to dispense with the services of their Hindu Ayahs in the light of the definition supplied by their compatriot, and rear their own children so that they can be the future torch-bearers of English spiritual light in the fields of Hindu darkness.

Time and again when the author of 'Verdict on India' drew the peoples' attention in India to pain in one form or another to indicate some wide-spread social abuse, they were seldom interested. To him their reactions were not direct, but suffering was merely something that fitted into the political pattern which could be counted as one of the responsibilities of the British Raj. To their claim that all these things would cease when India achieved her independence, he was sorely tempted to suggest that even in free countries men still suffer from a toothache. A suggestion of this nature would have gone down well in one of his earlier books "The Fool Hath Said" but in "Verdict on India" it stands as a symbol of the British perversity to turn a blind-eye to facts. If men in free countries are still prone to 'toothaches' they soon do something about it, but in a country whose interests are subordinated to foreign rule then these responsibilities rest squarely on the shoulders of the holders of the purse-strings. In an address in London, 21st June 1945 to the East India Association Lt.

quent phraseology as "In India, nursing is still regarded as a dishonourable profession by a vast majority of Indian women. They would degrade themselves by tending the sick and wounded. The prejudices of Victorian England, which Florence Nightingale had to fight are mere whims and fancies compared with the hide-bound rule of caste and custom which govern Hindu womanhood. India is still in the days of Mrs Gamp." and that "there are 60,000 cases of tuberculosis, 50 per cent of which are due to an institution of Purdah over which the British have absolutely no control and that religion was fighting progress, darkening the windows of the surgery and playing fantastic tricks with bottles in the dispensary", are entirely hollow and completely devoid of any sincere attempt to examine the real causes of this backwardness.

To lend emphasis to his argument that there are 60,000 cases of tuberculosis of which fifty per cent are a direct result of 'Purdah' over which the British have no control whatsoever. He cites an instance in this connection that one cannot see a female face in Peshawar and the females to be seen in public are covered from head to foot with two narrow slits for the eyes and a tiny hole for the mouth - that it was all the fresh air they ever got. His doctor lent confirmation to his observation that "If anybody had tried to invent a costume that was quite ideal for the incubation of microbes, he could not have done better than Purdah."

If one was expected to believe the travesty of



facts, the domestic life of India would have to undergo a radical change in order to live up to his accusations.

It is common knowledge that 'Purhah' or the 'Microbe incubator of Verdict on India' is worn by a great majority of Muslim women only, particularly the orthodox section of this community, as a dress for public excursions. It would be demanding too much of any of us to believe that even in the precincts of their own houses, away from public gaze, they still scrupulously adhered to this form of uncomfortable attire? It would be almost as ridiculous to place any credence on the absurd notion that English people wear evening dress complete with a stiff dress-shirt and tails from dawn to dusk.

Apart from the above reflection if fifty per cent of tuberculosis patients is a contribution of 'Purdah' how does he account for the other 30,000 who do not wear Purdah? Also how many of this astounding total of 60,000 are Muslim men who do not wear 'microbe incubators'? The plain unvarnished answer to this question of 60,000 cases of tuberculosis is the low standard of living which the authorities have made no effort to raise. There must be a minimum satisfaction of bodily wants in respect of diet, surroundings, and requisite periods of labour and rest, before the physique can combat the onslaughts of disease. One meal a day can hardly suffice to fortify an individual's resistance when other factors of poverty project themselves on the victim's head.

Secondly one can hardly endorse the statement that there is not a single female face to be seen in Peshawar, because it is a patent fact that in every big city of India the population is interspersed with a generous sprinkling of other communities in which Purdah does not feature as a form of dress in the female wardrobe. This trivial point is raised in an attempt to show how indiscriminate the pen of an English journalist could be when portraying facts.

It serves no useful point in labouring the question as to whose fault it is, that there are 60,000 cases of tuberculosis, and that it could not be the fault of British women, of whom there are hardly 65,000 in this vast country. Surely one cannot subscribe to this absurd psychology that even if there were 65,000 British women as nurses it would necessarily mean that the number of tuberculosis patients would decrease in proportion. The stress is laid here on the side-issue of nursing rather than the root cause of disease itself. We refuse to contribute to this Englishman's folly of attempting to lay the onus of the blame on to *English women* as we are invited to do, but lay it at the doors of the administration which has its brain centre in the Houses of Parliament in England.

If Nursing in India is regarded as a dishonourable profession by a vast majority of Indian women, whose fault is it? Surely not the Indian women's fault. Apart from Hindu womenhood, this antipathy is shared by the same sex of other

communities; and the reason is easy to find. During the prewar period educational qualifications for the nursing profession was consistently being raised, whilst the emoluments for probationers and student nurses were being steadily decreased. It is difficult to expect a girl who has spent twelve years in an educational institution at considerable cost to her parents, who could ill-afford the expense, to enter the nursing profession as a student nurse on a stipend of rupees ten per month, on which magnificent sum she had to satisfy her requirements in dress, amusements, toilet requisites and a few feminine knick-knacks. It would take more than the combined genius of Dr. Schacht and Beverly Nichols to perform this piece of financial jugglery. A new version of the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes, only in this case it happens to be the all-powerful ten rupee note:

Girls who have the backing of their parents find it a strain, so one can imagine the difficulties confronting the orphans in this unequal struggle. It then comes as no surprise to find that these girls accept any offer from ex-patients and visitors to go on excursions, picnics and cinemas in order to escape the humdrum existence of the hospital routine. To some the temptation to go astray is well-nigh irresistible in view of the sacrifices they are expected to make for the profession. Offers of matrimony are eagerly accepted and nursing in most cities came to be associated with ideas of a potent marriage-bureau and a form of licence which

could not meet with the approval of the conservative-old school, which abhorred laxity in any form.

This false economy is solely responsible for the paucity of nurses. Given a living wage with prospects the Nursing profession would be adopted as a career by a considerable number of young women of every community.

Another factor which contributes largely to this lack of enthusiasm for active co-operation in the work of the 'Ladies of the Lamp' is the fact that Indian women, whose educational reforms have not been undertaken on an effective scale till the turn of the last century have been obliged to profess a working knowledge of English both written and oral, in conformity with the standards pertaining to Anglo-Indian education, whilst vernacular is not entertained at all as a means of test or for use in hospitals.

Only during a war the authorities have seen fit to bring to public consciousness the deplorable lack of nursing facilities. They have staged recruiting drives, raised the emoluments and made the profession attractive, through added facilities with the selfish purpose of serving their own ends, namely the war effort. One is constrained to wonder why these war-time efforts by the authorities do not manifest themselves during peacetime, when this problem must be just as acute.

It is senseless to set down the idiosyncracies of patients as characteristic of the Indian nation. If a

Hindu private patient wishes to be washed several times a day due to the abnoxious idea of 'pollution' a thousand such cases can be instanced in other countries where private patients indulge in all the whims and fancies their money can afford to pay for.

A visit to the General ward in any Indian hospital would have convinced Beverly Nichols in this connection that Hindu patients devoid of the means of retaining private nurses have very little to say as regards washing off 'Pollution'.

This blind belief in auspicious and inauspicious days are not just an Indian phenomenon. There exists a vast army of superstitious and credulous individuals who make a very substantial contribution to the livelihood and fortunes of astrologers in every country, more so in the west where adequate publicity is accorded to this branch of science. He has only to take his mind back to occasions in his own home-land in which many of his limited circle of friends dreaded Fridays, Sundays and 13th of any month as unprofitable for any venture however innocent. So if this superstition prevails in the dark minds of uneducated Indians particularly in submitting to surgical operations or medical attention, we can hardly see the justification for this unwarranted condemnation for a common human failing.

It would not be out of place here to give the correct data of the medical position in India as regards the proportion of doctors and nurses to the population as compared with the United Kingdom.

In India there is one doctor to 10,000 of the population; whereas in the United Kingdom there is one to 1,000. There is one nurse to 56,000, against the United Kingdom's one to 300. There is one midwife for 70,000 whereas there should be one for 15,000. There is one health visitor to 350,000 whereas there should be one for 5,000. These figures are possibly the greatest indictment against those responsible for the welfare of the Empire in general and the Secretaries-of-State for India in particular, whose genius for inaugurating drives for recruitment to these professions and services, only expresses itself during a war despite the patent fact that in a country with a population of 400 million, the minimum requirements are 300,000 doctors, 772,000 nurses, 70,000 health visitors and 100,000 midwives.

Apart from the discrepancy in the facts as supplied by Beverly Nichols that there is one nurse to 65,000 people, instead of the proper figure of one to 56,000 the above data does not show up the medical position of the United Kingdom in a very favourable light particularly when we are led to believe that the torch of human freedom, enlightenment and social achievement burns brightest in the British Isles, where administration in the social field is rendered ten times easier, in view of the relative populations concerned and a hundred times more facile due to the mental disposition of British people for reforms. In his sweeping indictment he possibly lost sight of the fact, that the idea of a women's medical college in India was first mooted in 1913 but it was not till

1914 that the foundation stone was laid for this pioneer institution which was destined to play its part in the medical regeneration of the country from its inception in 1916.

If we do accept the mis-statement of one nurse to 65,000 then it will hardly astound any critic if eighteen relations came into hospital with a little boy, when people situated like the author of 'Verdict on India' can have two nurses at his beck and call. They were taking every precaution to see that their child died with at least his family in attendance.

## II

In pursuit of his diligent study of the communal differences he remarks that 'whilst in bed people were dropping in to see me, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs... but now I look back on it never an Indian'. What should have astonished him further must have been the fact that *no European* beside the communities mentioned even called on this *human barometer* of Indian communal discord to ascertain how his health or his mind was progressing in an Indian atmosphere.

Looking back we have similar reflections of how remarkably well the English mind functions through its vast army of Mr. and Mrs. Smiths in 'gauging' the hatred of the Muslim for the Hindu. They seem to be the only ones able to assess the depth of this feeling, despite the irrefutable fact that in the fields, the cities, the factories and in the trivial

excursions of every day life they mingle without the slightest friction. This harmony is disrupted at times by riots similar to the social upheavals in other countries, but whatever its cause it cannot be attributed to a mountain of fundamental differences which is incapable of solution. Experiments in the past prove conclusively how soon these differences are forgotten till some provocative episode serves to fan this communal animosity of the irresponsible elements of society into life again. It is futile to labour the sayings of a few dyspeptics to substantiate his view point on Hinduism. Sometimes these sayings lack sincerity owing to the purpose they seek to achieve. Sycophancy is a common failing of the East and flattery comes easily to the man who has an 'axe to grind'.

Hinduism may be filth to some Muslims and the statement that Gandhi is more than a god to a large section of the Hindu community may provoke resentment among other communities, but viewed in its proper perspective it is easily understandable. To a fanatical follower of any religion other religions are anathema to their orthodox minds and take on the form of any description of which their criticism is capable. Gandhi himself has repeatedly in his writings and speeches constantly reproved his followers from indulging in such ridiculous fancies by ascribing to him a place amongst the diety in their enthusiastic admiration for his repeated sacrifices, forgiving disposition and the austerity surrounding his life. These sentiments cannot be held against them, for few Englishmen or Indians can live the life



that Gandhi leads, least of all Beverly Nichols, otherwise we would have a few more excuses to call these men 'Gods' in the true Indian sense of admiration for the '*Super man*'.

If to some Muslims Hinduism and Gandhism are renugnant quite a number of the same community are ardent admirers of his life and philosophy and are staunch members of the Congress. Beverly Nichols finds great difficulty in understanding these men who proclaim their belief in Congress policy. The so-called welter of conflicting ideologies of the Congress are easily understood if one is willing to consider the questions objectively free from the prejudices of the English mind which lauds the attempts of men who strike at the root of a nation's life, whilst it condemns the men who at great personal risk strive for the essential harmony and fundamental unity of the Nation as a whole.

Gandhi's anti-industrialisation scheme is purely the raising of the economic standard of the masses till industrialisation can be applied to less capitalistic purposes than at present. The modern system of industrialisation tends to raise the tempo of production whilst on the other hand, the working class and the standard of the labour working class, is kept on the borderline of starvation, thereby increasing the margin of profits for the capitalistic bosses. The only hope for the masses lies not in a few moneyed-class of Indians, who in their callousness, if at all moved by pity can merely dole out a few rupees, but hardly have th

courage or unselfishness to uproot the pest of poverty and 'unequal distribution, but in themselves alone. It is in this connection that Gandhi has started his Charka scheme (spinning wheel) whereby each house can supplement its income, through its sale of handicrafts which need a very insignificant outlay. This will inevitably raise the standard of living, and by the proper adjustment of industrialisation to the national economic life as advocated by Jawaharlal Nehru, India can look forward to an era of prosperity in which the fear of want can be greatly reduced.

If Dr. Khan Sahib the Premier of the Congress Ministry in 1937 was fatiguing in the enunciation of his principles and had helped to raise Beverly Nichols's temperature, it is not unusual when the victim happens to be an Englishman, only that the reaction to Indian aspirations in responsible English quarters for Indian welfare does not manifest itself in a temperature, but a marked inability to think clearly along the well advertised principles of the Government of the people, by the people *(of the same nationality)*.

If we take it for granted that Dr. Khan Sahib sent for a British Doctor to treat the casualties in the riots at Peshawar it does not necessarily mean that as Muslims they were afraid of Hindu doctors owing to the difference of their respective doctrines, or vice-versa as so proudly claimed by Beverly Nichols, who goes so far as to boast of the fair-deal of the European in his dealings with the Indians irrespective of their caste or creed. Such

a short sighted view-point confirms the suspicion of British egotism being unable to see further than its own nose. The *modus-operandi* of British intervention in communal riots is to introduce 'force' with the business end of its military rifles and armoured cars, and the irony of the situation is completely lost on their obtuse minds of Dr. Khan Sahib requesting a British doctor to clear up the damage done by his compatriots.

In other cases where British brains and skill are taken advantage of instead of the Indian talent available at all times, speaks volumes for the pernicious propaganda of the British, in impressing upon Indian minds the idea of superiority in anything British and thereby inculcating a very marked feeling of inferiority, and undermining the public confidence in anything indigenous or Indian. The simple manner in which this is achieved is worth a study. In their schools everything British is extolled; a standard of proficiency in the English language is necessary for recruitment to Government services whilst all vernacular is regarded as a handicap. In every sphere of industry, commerce and sciences the Britishers' salaries are by far higher than those drawn by competent Indians performing the same functions and its attendant responsibilities. Under these circumstances the average person can be excused for falling a victim to this well laid trap and asking for anything with an English label on it. This delusion can easily be dispelled in the very argument chosen by the author of 'Verdict on India', namely medicine. Hundreds of Indian Medical practi-

tioners in the big cities of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Bihar to name just a few have become legendary figures in the annals of medical and surgical history through their super efficiency, and thousands of their clients have been members belonging to every communal sect in India. At the present time honorary and paid medical practitioners are in attendance at every public Indian hospital and no Muslim or Hindu ever dreams of imagining that he would be the victim of the doctor's spleen owing to their different religious outlooks.

This preference for English doctors to attend to Indian patients is not one of the subtleties, which are so dear to all Congress apologists, because they can think clearly in a crisis, but on the contrary only a reflection of one of the causes which bolster up the overweening self-esteem of the average Englishman, who is unable to think clearly in a crisis, free from the prejudices of the presumed greatness of the 'old school tie' and the subtleties which are so dear to all apologists for the idiosyncracies of the British Lion.

### III

One is constained to answer the retorts of Beverly Nichols whose grasp of the situation seems to be symptomatic of an indigestion of half-truths which take the form of a vitriolic attack on Hinduism. He seems absolutely convinced that Hinduism is a decadent philosophy because of its votaries observance of the ceremony of Lakshmi

Devi, the Hindu Goddess of wealth. May we remind him that this worship of the rupee, as erroneously presumed by him is not far removed from the offering of part of the harvest in thanks-giving in the Service of the High Church. If censure must be directed to Hinduism then what reply can we expect of the worship at the altars of mammon in the rest of the world, where religion hardly plays any part at all owing to their insatiable greed for accumulation? How often have Christians attempted to bribe their own particular saint or diety with offers in the form of charity if their plans worked out successfully, or saved them from the just workings of fate or retribution for their evil actions? How often have the worshippers of Christ invoked the help of God in their financial gambles under the camouflaged appeal for divine aid? The answer would be revealing. As Beverly Nichols is so concerned with the decadence of Hinduism it might be as well to recommend for his edification the living drama that is being portrayed in the 'Daily Mirror' and the 'News of the World' in which rape, murder, robbery and adultery are given full publicity. Are we to believe in the face of this damning evidence that such actions are symptoms of a decadent Christian philosophy? Or accept with the smugness of the author that the idealism of a religion must be embellished with these black spots of immorality?

1 Kashmir is inhabited by a preponderance of the Muslim community and a Hindu rules over their destinies, through the support and con-

sent of the British paramount power. The cow is held in high esteem by the Hindus owing to the religious sanction accorded to 'cow-protection' and to kill a cow would be tantamount to hurting the religious susceptibilities of the ruler. The penalty for violating this law in earlier times was extreme, but now the death sentence has been commuted to transportation. It is hardly worth mentioning what treatment would be accorded in a Muslim state to a person who desecrated their religious beliefs in which the pig is held as an accursed thing. So it is hardly worth the while of any individual to lend a hearing to the complaints or invectives of either sect.

#### IV

We are recommended to study a part of Mark Twain's description of Hinduism with the following comment. "Here it is. As you study it, remember that it was the considered opinion of a very great American, a man who loved his neighbour and feared God". And in this connection we cannot do better than quote Mark Twain.

"In Benares they tell you that if a pilgrim should ever cross to the other side of the Ganges and get caught out and die there, he would at once come to life again in the form of an ass. Think of that, after all this trouble and expense. You see, the Hindu has a childish and unreasoning aversion to being turned into an ass. It is hard to tell why, one could properly expect an ass to have

an aversion to being turned into a Hindu. He would lose dignity by it, self-respect, and nine tenths of his intelligence. But the Hindu who changes into an ass would not lose anything at all... unless, of course you count his religion. And he would gain much. He would gain release from his slavery to two million Gods and twenty million priests, fakirs, holy mendicants and other sacred bacilli; he would escape the Hindu hell; he would also escape the Hindu heaven. These are the advantages which the Hindu ought to consider; and then—he'd go over and die on the other side."

And as a passing comment that "the yellowing pages of an old American classic though somewhat out-dated offered a key to modern India," but his own words in the same para "The urbane old humorist for once in a way dropped the mask, and the face he revealed was stern and terrible" gives us the *real* key to the quotation of Mark Twain cited above.

A careful analysis of the reference with Beverly Nichols' comments makes us wonder if western education measures up to its much boosted claims, or if the standard of intelligence exhibited by these leading lights of modern literature is worthy of such celebrated institutions as Oxford and Cambridge to name just a few universities. Surely a university degree is not essential to assess the value of the above statements as it is plain to any reader that this indictment of Mark Twain is purely the product of the western mind, to which

Hinduism presents a maze of philosophical contradictions. A hundred Mark Twains, Bernard Shaws, Huxleys, H. G. Wells or lesser lights like Beverly Nichols and company could not offer any description with the full conviction of truth of an Eastern problem which their western minds steeped in materialism is unable to fully appreciate, or understand. Their thesis might sound plausible or feasible but to understand the merits of Hinduism the approach must be eastern with sympathy for the subject in hand, not hostile criticism.

One may visualise the difficulty of an Easterner in understanding the Holy Trinity of Christianity, if he professed no sympathy at all for the enquiry, and studied this question from a critical standpoint. So we can dismiss Mark Twain (or his learned supporter) as an authority on Hinduism for several reasons; one that Mark Twain is a westerner and that his work of "More Tramps Abroad" was written in the nineteenth century and it will be of no avail to maintain that life or the hands of the clock have stood still, till Beverly Nichols arrived to lend confirmation to the view of the great American; secondly that Mark Twain was essentially a humorist in his style, and as such his art permitted him to take liberties with facts to delight his readers with bizarre descriptions. If his calling was that of a Theologian or his pastime that of Theosophy we might be inclined to accept his persiflage seriously. He might be a very great American, a man who loved his neighbour and feared God. There are millions of such people in America and millions.



were in England who loved their neighbours and feared God, but it did not stop them from lynching the Negroes in America in the last decade and the burning at the stake in England of their beloved neighbours during the reign of Queen Mary because of religious differences. The Spanish Inquisition stands as a memorial to the achievements of *great men* who loved their neighbours and feared God. It would be in the interests of international good-will if the founts of western education included history and elementary common-sense or practical logic in a more instructive form in their present syllabus.

## CHAPTER VI.

## Sober Reflections on Hinduism.

It is a difficult task to champion the cause of a religion that one has not inherited at birth or been converted into, but it is the bounden duty according to the tenets of Christianity to right a wrong whenever possible. This attack on Hinduism apart from its inherent contradictions betrays a superficial knowledge of the religious principles concerned and its typical misrepresentation by western critics.

The author sets out to assure us that this attack is not an attack on the Indian character or the Indian peoples, but on the Hindu religion alone or "the groups of religions, philosophies, cultures which today parade themselves under the wide banner of Hinduism;" and on the following page he enunciated a fact that "A book about India, which is not a religious book is not a book about India at all". However we need not enquire to some length into the labyrinth of contradictions of which the worthy disciples of western culture are capable, but concern ourselves with the points raised against the religion itself.

India has her quota of Wilberforces, her Florence Nightingales, her Father Damiens, as well as her Tagores and Jagadish Boses and the presumption that she is so singularly weak in the type of selfless characters, who brighten the pages of the western History is *not* due to any flaw in

the Indian character, nor can we agree with Beverly Nichols that it is due to the deadening influence of Hinduism. Hinduism as it *is*—not as it *might* be, because there are 160 million people inspired by other religions; but solely due to a refusal of the West to acknowledge the intrinsic merits of anything Eastern, particularly when these national figures challenge the established names in the West. The reason for this lack of interest and appreciation in the virtues of the East lie in the fact that the West has arrogated to itself a feeling of superiority in every form of culture and does not hesitate to advertise to the whole world the merits of their own national or international heroes, whereas the eastern flowers of culture are born to "bud and bloom in the desert air unseen".

Nobody but a super-egotist would be responsible for the statement that of the many fine, truthful unselfish Indians he met hardly one was a sincere Hindu. Surely one is not expected to take this view-point seriously, when we have the astounding total of 240 million Hindus to choose from, and more so when we can name a dozen or so off-hand such as Mahatma Gandhi, Tagore, Nehru and a host of leading political and spiritual figures who have sacrificed fame and fortune of their vocations, to fight for the cause of their country inspired by their convictions alone. Sincerity is the keynote of their lives both in the religious and practical sense, when imprisonment and criticism seem to be the only reward for their continued sacrifices.

Beverly Nichols in his attempted explanation and criticism of this religion extends to every Indian the invitation to retort with an exposure of the faults of the modern Christian for he feels that the Christian world could do with a lesson. Apart from taking advantage of his noble generosity in extending this Christian invitation of mudslinging, we could do better by explaining a few misconceptions which would go a long way in advancing the virtues of one religion rather than indulging in criticisms of another religion, which will not penetrate the encrustation of snobbery and prejudice of its votaries.

Before we proceed with the definition of Hinduism it would be as well to quote another Englishman C.F. Andrews in 'Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas'. "There are few things perhaps more difficult to accomplish than to put oneself in sympathetic touch with a religion which is not one's own by birth inheritance. The effort that has to be made is far more sustained than that of understanding a poem in a foreign tongue. There is a strangeness about every mood and tone of worship as well as in the words of the sacred texts of Scripture, and the revealed doctrines held to be orthodox".

The worship of the cow is more correct when referred to as "cow protection". This reverence paid to the cow is perhaps more difficult to understand in the west, but when we appreciate the fact that in the distant past when human history changed from the nomadic life of the hunter to

agricultural pursuits, the cow played a very important part in providing milk for daily food; tilling the soil; supplying dung for fuel, plastering the earthen floors and manure to be used as fertilisers. In this way the cow became a necessary adjunct to any household to be cherished as a priceless treasure. At the present time the cow is the mother to India's dumb millions, who find in cow's milk the necessary nutrition to supplement their meagre dietary deficiencies. Religion gave sanction to cow—protection in the same way as we admire the sanitary regulations and laws of Moses which would have ceased to be observed if it had no religious authority to enforce and ensure its continuance. (It would be as well for Christians to ponder the fact that Jesus Christ was born in a cattle manger).

A few agnostics or iconoclasts might impress Beverly Nichols that Young India wants to march to the factory while the leader insists on dragging them to church. He finds that "Hinduism in its most extreme and aggressive form is a living and turbulent force. Its voice rises above the roar of the factories and the workshops, it dominates the assemblies of politicians and students." He has cited Professor D. P. Mukerji of Lucknow University, as confirmation - "Examinees begin their answers, clerks and shopkeepers begin their work with an invocation to their favourite deities at the top of their books. A good division at the examination, a rapid promotion in service and a smart deal in the bazar or Stock Exchange, can all

be secured by God's grace administered through a religious preceptor. No leader so openly waits for divine inspiration as Mr. Gandhi, nor is so admired for it, none so constantly mixes politics with religion even in his most millennial moments... no social scientist in India has got a chance against the scientists of transcendental knowledge, no non - theological school of metaphysics ever had or ever can have any considerable prestige".

Among the greater proportion of sincere Christians we have the same expression of belief in divine influence which they invoke in every commonplace act both in appeal for aid and thanks-giving.

If religion permeates the life and actions of the Indian, it is a fact that should be more appreciated in the West where God and religion have ceased to exist in their quest for power and wealth.

That a Christian should deplore the influence of religion speaks volumes for the Western attitude towards spiritual culture. If we should have reason to be proud according to this authority that "of the tiny proportion of the literate it is safe to suggest that only those who live in big cities, in constant contact with western influences, have thrown off the faith of their fathers. At the most generous estimate this gives us only a few thousand who can claim to be iconoclasts in any sense in which we understand the word. The rest—the

teeming millions—remain bowed at the feet of the idols.”

It would not be out of place to remind him that the world in general could benefit considerably by remaining bowed in reverence to the tenets of their respective religions.

## II

What is Hinduism? The author takes good care to say that his essay on Hinduism was written in the hills far away from dictionaries and religious text-books, for he was convinced that they would be of little help because “Hinduism is almost indefinable, presenting a hotchpotch of almost every fear dream and delusion, which has ever drifted through the tangled shadowy jungle of man’s brain.”

The more is the pity that this religious critic did not resort to dictionaries and religious text-books in quest of the spiritual beauty of Hinduism, otherwise he would have found a striking similarity in all religions including Christianity which hold out dreams of Heaven and Paradise as the case may be on the one hand, with fear of Hell and Limbo on the other. The sombre spectre of superstition and fear haunts every religion.

In the *Selected Works of Voltaire* by Joseph McCabe we have a description of the Christians’ attitude to other religions; ‘Discourse of a Turk.’ “Most of thy dogs of Christians have spoken folly”

about our Mahommed. A certain Baron de Tott, a man of such ability and geniality, who did us great service in the last war, induced me some time ago to read a book of one of your most learned men named Grotius, entitled '*The truth of the Christian Religion*'. This Grotus accuses our great Mahommed of forcing men to believe that a pigeon spoke in his ear, that a camel conversed with him during the night, and that he had put half the moon in his sleeve. If the most learned of your Christ-worshippers can write such asinine stuff, what must I think of the others".

If the hotchpotch of every fear, dream, delusion, fostered by a mass of ancient texts, songs, legends is the sole peculiarity of Hinduism alone, then we are entitled to enquire as to what category the following questions on Christian teaching can be relegated 'Questions of Zapata' in Selected Works of Voltaire by McCabe. "Question 7." The book entitled *Joshua* says that Joshua had deuteronomy engraved on stones coated with mortar; this passage in Joshua, and others by ancient writers, clearly prove that in the day of Moses and Joshua the peoples of the East engraved their laws and observations on stone and brick. The Pentateuch tells us that the Jewish people were without food and clothing in the desert; it seems hardly probable that if they had no tailors or shoemakers, they had men who were able to engrave a large book. In any case how did they preserve this large work inscribed in mortar?

Question II.—"I should, with all my heart like to eat the fruit which hung from the tree of know-



ledge and it seems to me that prohibition to eat it is strange. Since God endowed man with reason, he ought to encourage him to advance in knowledge. Did he wish to be served only by fools? I should like to have speech with the serpent, since it is so intelligent; but I should like to know what language it spoke. The Emperor Julian, a great philosopher, asked this of the great Saint Cyril who could not meet the question and said to the Emperor: "You are the Serpent". St. Cyril was not polite, but you will observe that he did not perpetrate this theological impertinence until Julian was dead?"

"Genesis says that the serpent eats earth, you know that Genesis is wrong and that the earth alone contains no nourishment. In regard to God walking familiarly every day in the garden and talking to Adam and Eve and the serpent, I may say that it would have been very pleasant to be there. But as I think you are much more fitted for the kind of society which Joseph and Mary had in the stable at Bethlehem, I will not advise you to visit the Garden of Eden, especially as the gate is now guarded by a *cherub* armed to the teeth. It is true that according to the rabbis *cherub* means "ox". A curious kind of porter! please let me know what a *cherub* is? The *Kerubim* (or *Cheribum*) of the old testament are the winged bulls of the ancient Babylonians of which there are two fine specimens in the British Museum."

Question 21.—Moses having wedded the

daughter of an idolator, how could God choose him as his prophet without reproaching him? How could Pharaoh's magicians work the same miracles as Moses except that of covering the land with lice and vermin? How could they change into blood all the waters, since these had already been changed into blood by Moses? How was it that Moses, led by God himself, and at the head of six hundred and thirty thousand fighting men, fled with his people instead of taking Egypt, in which God had slain all the first born? Egypt never had an army of a hundred thousand men, from the first mention of it in historical times. How was it that Moses flying with his troops from the land of Goshen, crossed half of Egypt, instead of going straight to Canaan, and advanced as far as Memphis, between Baal-Sephon and the Red Sea? Finally how could Pharaoh pursue him with all his cavalry when in the fifth plague of Egypt, God had just destroyed all the horses and beasts in the country, and moreover Egypt which is much broken by canals, always had very little cavalry?"

"Question 31.—How shall I speak of the battle of Joshua with the Amorites at Beth-horon on the way to Gibeon? The Lord sends a rain of stones from Beth-horon to Azekah, therefore the Amorites were exterminated by rocks which fell from heaven over a space of fifteen miles. The Scripture says that it was midday. Why then, did Joshua command the sun and the moon to stand still in the middle of the sky in order to give him time to complete the defeat of a small

troop which was already exterminated? Why then did he tell the moon to stand still at midday? How could moon and sun remain in the same place for a day? Which commentator shall I consult for an explanation of this extraordinary truth?"

"Question 35.—I need your advice to enable me to understand the 19th verse of the first chapter of Judges—"And the Lord was with Judah; and he drove out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron". I cannot of my own feeble lights understand how the God of heaven and earth superseded the order of nature and suspended the eternal laws in favour of the Jewish people, was unable to vanquish the inhabitants of a valley because they had iron chariots. Can it be true that as some learned men say, that Jews at that time regarded their God as a local and protecting deity, sometimes more powerful, at other times less powerful than the God of the enemy? And this is not proved by the reply of Jephthah: "Ye possess by right what your God Camos has given you: suffer then that we take what our God Adonai has promised us?"

"Question 38. I pray you tell me by what trick Samsom caught 300 foxes tied them together by their tails and fastened lighted torches to their hind quarters in order to set fire to the harvests of the Phillistines. Foxes are found only in wooded country. There was no forest in this district, and it seems rather difficult to catch 300 foxes alive and tie them together by their tails.

It is then said that he killed a thousand Phillistines with the jaw-bone of an ass; and that a spring issued from one of the teeth of this jaw. When it comes to jaws of asses, you certainly owe me explanations?"

"Question 43. The wealth of David and Solomon, which amounted to more than five hundred thousand million gold ducats, seems to be not easily reconciled with the poverty of the country and with the condition to which the Jews were reduced under Saul when they had not the means of sharpening their plough-shares and axes. Our cavalry officers will shrug their shoulders when I tell them that Solomon had four hundred thousand horses in a little country where there never were and are not today, anything but asses, as I have already had the honour to represent to you."

Lastly Question 57. Having received your instructions on all the prodigies of this nature, I shall have to say that God was condemned to be executed for original sin. And if I am told that there was never any question of original sin, either in the old or New Testament, that is merely stated that Adam was condemned to die on the day on which he should eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and that he did not die; and that Augustine, bishop of Hippo, formerly a Manichaen was the first to set up the doctrine of original sin, I submit to you that, as my hearers are not the simple minded people of Hippo, I run some risk inciting derision by speaking much without saying anything. When certain cavillers came to show

me that God could not possibly be executed because an apple was eaten four thousand years before his death and could not possibly have redeemed the human race, yet apart from a chosen few, left the whole of it in the devil's claws, I had only verbiage to give in reply and went away to 'hide my shame.'

Beverly Nichols answer would be much appreciated and very interesting indeed :

A short history of Hinduism is necessary to enable the reader to understand the problem clearly, and refute the criticism that caste is the sheet anchor of Hinduism. A religion, according to Beverly Nichols that has no churches, no pope, no bible and most important of all no history and because of this complete lack of factual background Hinduism is intangible fluid and elusive.

Dr. Pratt, Professor of Philosophy; Williams College, summarises the difficulties of rendering a faithful interpretation of an alien religion by a heretic. "To give the feelings of an alien religion it is necessary to do more than expound its concepts and describe its history. One must catch its sentiment, feel ones way into its symbols, its cults, its art, and then seek to impart these not merely by scientific exposition but in all sorts of indirect ways."

Religion is the conversation between God and man. No matter what form religion may take the common goal is ideal spiritual life. Their differences lie not in their aim but the extent of

bour. Strengthening his appeals, with offerings of food or whatever gifts he could afford. With this form of submission he learned to employ certain postures of kneeling, bowing the head, lifting his hands up to the invisible powers on whose good-will his very life depended. When oral language became the chief medium of conversational intercourse outmoding the earlier method of signs, he addressed the good deities in all the terms of glorification requesting their protection against the evil powers and accompanied the supplication with offerings. Men whose memories had greater retentive power than the average, remembered formulae for praise, postures of worship, gesture of the hands and expressions of the face and so were called upon to officiate, as mediators between man and the invisible powers. These mens' vocations consisted solely of performing at functions and so the priestly offices originated.

Primitive man's first impulse to pray was for himself, to invoke protection against his enemies and the inclemency of the weather. He prayed earnestly for the powers to satisfy the needs of his body, in all his steps of evolution from the hunter to the agriculturist. In order to make his prayer for self-interest more facile he found it easier to worship graven images reproduced in the likeness he presumed his deity resembled. He anointed them, put food and garlands of flowers before them. While his prayers were answered he sang and danced before them, but if they continued to disappoint him, they were supplanted by another set of gods of his own choice.

progress they achieve. How did religion come into man's life? And why should there be so many apparently antagonistic creeds?

A rational analysis of religion and its inception can be traced briefly by studying the life of primitive man.

Natural causation such as thunder, lightning, the sun, moon, seasons, health and illness were unknown to the child-like mind of primitive man, because his undeveloped mentality could not grasp their proper significance or trace their causes. Suffice to say that these appeared as mysteries to him. His only explanation of these phenomena was that they were the result of actions of invisible human personalities more powerful than himself.

When in the possession of good health, and the heavens sunny and clear, his hunting good he ascribed his good fortune to the benevolence of favourable powers. Ill-health, storms and nature's independability where his desires were concerned, was accounted for by the predominance of powers that were not pleased with him. At first he regarded both good and evil powers with suspicion and distrust, till as time went on his confidence in the good powers increased considerably.

Later he devised means of placating the evil powers, by utilising methods similar to those employed in imploring mercy of a stranger or neigh-

labour. Strengthening his appeals, with offerings of food or whatever gifts he could afford. With this form of submission he learned to employ certain postures of kneeling, bowing the head, lifting his hands up to the invisible powers on whose good-will his very life depended. When oral language became the chief medium of conversational intercourse outmoding the earlier method of signs, he addressed the good deities in all the terms of glorification requesting their protection against the evil powers and accompanied the supplication with offerings. Men whose memories had greater retentive power than the average, remembered formulae for praise, postures of worship, gesture of the hands and expressions of the face and so were called upon to officiate, as mediators between man and the invisible powers. These men's vocations consisted solely of performing at functions and so the priestly offices originated.

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As primitive man gained in knowledge his gods increased. The priests who died were regarded as deities who could further man's ends in the next world with the same zeal and enthusiasm they evinced during their earthly existence. In this way he tried to bridge the gulf between himself and the unseen, through the influence of emotions as his undeveloped mind had not begun to function rationally.

Religion to the primitive man was the culminating point of sentient emotion and impulses. In his disappointment and suffering it became his only hope. Besides mitigating his sorrows it became synonymous with the idea of protection against evil from every side, and as he co-operated with his neighbours against a common enemy or danger, he felt that his prayers and offerings helped his deity to overcome the powers of evil.

Gradually he came to depend on his deity for the successful outcome of every venture and if they turned out otherwise, he began to look into his own actions to see if they had been the cause of offence and hence failed to please the Gods. His sacrifices took the shape of animal flesh and blood together with the choicest things he could afford in appeasement. Thus saddled with a god for every influence on mortal life, primitive religion became essentially a religion of fear. This fear became the breeding ground of superstition in which the slightest untoward occurrence in life seemed to portend the heralding of calamities to follow. Coincidences of this nature com-

pelled him to believe that mystic significance was attached to trivial happenings. In this way life became one series of adjustments to ominous events. He devised magic spells, incantations, performed the most intricate ceremonies, wore talismans and resorted to kindred practices to avert malign influences on his life or property.

As reason began to assert itself and man became more enlightened. Those whose faculties were far in advance of others, were looked upon as the chosen of God. These men with high ideals, higher reasoning powers and undaunted faith in the goodness of humanity have arisen from time to time to combine the laws of the ancients with the creeds founded by them and so gave a new meaning to life. These prophets or founders of great religions embarked upon a stupendous task of leading mankind to greater heights. Their teachings were of a higher spiritual nature and man in order to follow this higher plane of thought had to remodel his life along the severe lines set by the doctrines he followed. The prophets introduced reforms, gave every assurance that God heard the prayers of his devotees if they were uttered in love with an unselfish aim, and placed morality above empty ceremonial practices.

Dr. Dhalla in *'Our Perfecting World'* writes—  
 "Since Zarathstra's advent on his prophetic mission some three thousand years ago, there have lived and died for the redemption of the world, such sages and seers as Moses and Buddha, Mahavira and Confucius, Laotze, Jesus and

Mahommed; the sublimest souls of all time. Sainted spirits in human form who walk with angelic steps and in whose persons God stood revealed to mankind."

Again "It is the way or path of life that each of the great prophets undertakes to reveal to mankind. Jesus expressly calls himself The Way. Zoroaster proclaims that there is but one path of life capable of leading mankind to his destined goal and that is the path of Righteousness. All other paths, he says, are no paths. Buddha interprets his philosophy of life in his noble Eight fold path. The Tao of Lao-Tze signifies the way in the Chinese tongue, and the name of Japan's national cult Shinto means the Way of the Gods. The apostles and disciples of the prophets explained, interpreted, supplemented their teachings and exhorted men to follow them faithfully."

There are three great religions which have been handed down from the dawn of history. Judaism, Zoroastrianism and Hinduism. The first has been almost supplanted by its daughter religion Christianity. Zoroastrianism still struggles on with a very small circle of Parsees to uphold its glorious traditions and history; whilst Hinduism has withstood the impact of every creed from East and West and survived civilisation after civilisation till the present day, only to emerge stronger in every sense, owing to its absorption of the philosophies of other religions. All kinds of philosophies from the high flights of Vedanta, Buddhist Agnosticism, and the Atheistic form of

Jainism including the innumerable forms of idolatry, find a place in the accomodating bosom of Hinduism. How, then one may ask does one explain how Hinduism can afford to express such contradictory philosophies and still continue to survive as an identifiable religion as a whole? The answer is simple if one gets a correct perspective of the inherent value of Hinduism. Most religions believe that the wages of sin is death as expressed by St. Paul and this basic principle forms the nucleus of almost all religious instructions from East to West, but the message of Hinduism is that the wages of sin is living. A series of rebirths to work out the penance for sins committed in the former existence till the soul is completely divested of sin. Herein lies the essential difference between Hinduism and the other doctrincs.

Before we go further there is one other fact worth noting. Hinduism is not a missionary religion in the commonly accepted sense of the word. It has doubtless absorbed other religions, philosophies, through a gradual evolutionary character, whilst Christianity extends to all corners of the globe; Islam influences the people from Europe to Asia and Buddhism assumes an international role, Hinduism is restricted to the Geographical limits of India alone; and brings its influence to bear on over 250 million inhabitants, almost one fifth of the human race.

Hinduism which allows greater freedom of thought, but insists on orthodoxy in every day

conception that truth can assume different aspects to various prophets, the Hindu religion shows a commendable spirit of tolerance in regarding every religion as valid with equal contributions of truth.

It is difficult to understand the perfection of the Hindu cult unless we bear in mind the living side of the universe. The elements have had spiritual ideas attached to their functions under the headings of Varuna, Pavana, Agni, Indra and Kubera. In the explanation of their worship Swami Vivekananda gives us further insight into the mysteries of Hindu philosophy "Nor is the use of images compulsory in Hinduism. Only if a man can realise his divine nature more easily with the help of an image, would it be right to call that a sin? Nor, even when he has passed that stage, should he call it an error. To the Hindu, man is not travelling from error to truth but from truth to truth, from lower truth to higher truth. To him all religions from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realise the Infinite, each determined by the condition of its birth and association. Each of these

life, derives its strength from the Vedas of the Bhagvadgita (Bhagavat-gita) and the Upanishads. A form of spiritual law discovered and enlarged by each reformer and saint. The claim that the Vedas or collection of spiritual truths is *without beginning or end* is confirmed by an analogy of the discovery of the 'Law of Gravity' or any such natural laws, which have been made known to us since its discovery and which has functioned long before man's knowledge of it, and will continue to function even if man was prepared to forget about it. In this connection Swami Vivekananda declared at the world Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 "Here it may be urged that these laws, as laws may be without end, but they must have had a beginning. Now the Vedas teach us that creation is without beginning or end. Science has proved to us that the sum total of cosmic energy is always the same. Then if there was a time when nothing existed, where was all this manifested energy? Some say it was in a potential form in God. In that case God is some times potential and sometimes kinetic, which would

system after system is being evolved out of chaos, made to run for a time and again destroyed. This is what the Hindu boy repeats everyday with his Guru 'This sun and this moon the lord has, created like the suns and moons of previous cycles', and this agrees with modern science."

Hinduism lays great stress on the primacy of the values of the spirit and the fact it has endured for over fifty three centuries lends confirmation to the toughness of its character and the value of its teaching in having withstood the test of time and evolution. The Hindu shares the belief with other creeds that the soul and the body constitute two parallel lines of existence. The mind and the matter. There is also the undeniable fact that bodies inherit certain tendencies through the influence of the mind, which seeks expression in the fittest medium for its display. 'This temperament regardless of the course it pursues either in thorny pessimism, rosy optimism or sheer placidity is accounted for by actions of the past life of the individual. For it seems inconceivable that a just and merciful God can create man, in a spirit of partiality making some happy and dooming others to life of misery and unhappiness. Hence our conception of the immortality of the soul is fully borne out, but the Hindus belief goes further. To him the death of the individual means only a change of the soul from one body to another."

"Unlike other creeds the Hindu Religion sees salvation outside its own fold and does not profess belief in doctrines and dogmas, but in realising

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"If I may be allowed to use a simile, creator and creation are two lines, without beginning, without end, running parallel to each other. God is power, an ever-active providence, under whom



system after system is being evolved out of chaos, made to run for a time and again destroyed. This is what the Hindu boy repeats everyday with his Guru "This sun and this moon the lord has, created like the suns and moons of previous cycles", and this agrees with modern science."

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"Unlike other creeds the Hindu Religion sees salvation outside its own fold and does not profess belief in doctrines and dogmas, but in realising.

"God in human life. Self-knowledge is man's highest mission with self-fulfilment as his ultimate destiny. In the true knowledge of self he begins to realise the universal self of which he is an insignificant part. He learns his proper relationship with his fellow creatures and finds an answer to the riddle "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, because thou art thy neighbour" embodied in "*Tat Twam Asi*".

The Hindu pantheon so loosely alluded to by Beverly Nichols to signify the polytheistic tendency of Hinduism, is far from correct when the spirit of its teaching is fully understood. We have Swami Vivekananda's assurance in his address "Descend we now from the aspirations of philosophy to the religion of the ignorant. At the very outset I may tell you that there is no *polytheism* in India. In every temple, if one stands by and listens, one will find worshippers applying all the attributes of God including omnipresence, to the images. It is not polytheism nor would the name henotheism explain the situation. 'The rose by any other name would smell as sweet' Names are not explanations. Mahatma Gandhi writes "Worshipping God is singing the praise of God. Prayer is a confession of one's own unworthiness and weakness. God has a thousand names, or rather, he is nameless. We may worship or pray to Him by whichever name we please. Some call him Rama, some Krishna, others call him God. All worship the same spirit. But as all foods do not agree with all, so all names do not appeal to all. Each chooses the name according

to his own associations, and He being the In-Dweller the All-Powerfull the Omniscient, knows our innermost feelings and responds to us according to our deserts."

Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in cultural Problems give us another sober view of this problem. "Hinduism however represents an effort at comprehension and co-operation. The different dogmas give imaginative presentations of the basic truth of the divine in us. We cannot dispense with them, as they are the ways by which we envisage the eternal under the forms of time, the unchanging counsels of God under the forms of the changing world. Poetry, myth, and symbolism have their place in religion. Their purpose is to serve as pathways to spiritual awakening and development. The creed is the starting point. Belief is the precursor of action. It directs the will. All creeds are attempts of the finite mind to grasp the infinite. They are all valuable in so far as they help us reach the ultimate goal. They are different, because they are adapted to the different needs of the people, their race and history, their sex and temperament. But they are all tentative and so there is no justification for intolerance. Religion should not be confused with fixed intellectual conceptions".

Again for the bigoted critic we quote an English woman Annie Beasant a theosophist in 'Four Great Religions'. "So we have in Hinduism rites, ceremonies, observances, images, countless forms of worship adapted to the countless types

of the human knowledge and human ignorance. But they are all adopted to draw out love; they are all adopted to stimulate devotion; they are all adopted to bring out worship, because it is this attitude of the soul that is important and not the intellectual form in which worship is couched. By these means men gradually rise to the one supreme image of Him, who is the Lord of the Universe; they rise to the conception of Ishvara, the one Lord above all and by these means are prevented from dragging down the sublime conception of the one God to the low levels of their early ignorance, making the Lord of the universe the image of human passions, moving within human limitations. They are constantly reminded that they do not know God as He is, but only a little ray of Him, as much as they have capacity to receive. And as they grow they realise with delight that more of Him flows into the conception of Him that they adore, expanding it, illuminating it, subliming it, till it seems to yield some vision of His glory. Rising to Ishwara, they may worship Him as Vishnu, or in any of Vishnus' Avataras. They may worship him as Shiva the great Yogi, the Lord of Wisdom. Then they have reached the conception of the One which underlies the many manifestations."

The Hindu declares that God cannot be really known or understood even by his own prophets, who only catch a glimpse of Divinity of God. One need not necessarily have consistent versions of it as consistency can only be arrived at when God has been fully revealed. With this

conception that truth can assume different aspects to various prophets, the Hindu religion shows a commendable spirit of tolerance in regarding every religion as valid with equal contributions of truth.

It is difficult to understand the perfection of the Hindu cult unless we bear in mind the living side of the universe. The elements have had spiritual ideas attached to their functions under the headings of Varuna, Pavana, Agni, Indra and Kubera. In the explanation of their worship Swami Vivekananda gives us further insight into the mysteries of Hindu philosophy "Nor is the use of images compulsory in Hinduism. Only if a man can realise his divine nature more easily with the help of an image, would it be right to call that a sin? Nor, even when he has passed that stage, should he call it an error. To the Hindu, man is not travelling from error to truth but from truth to truth, from lower truth to higher truth. To him all religions from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realise the Infinite, each determined by the condition of its birth and association. Each of these marks a stage of progress, and every soul is a young eagle soaring higher and higher gathering more and more strength, till it reaches the glorious Sun."

'Unity in Variety is the plan of nature and the Hindu has recognized it. Every other religion lays down certain fixed dogmas and tries to force

the whole of society to adopt them. They place before society one coat which must fit Jack and John and Henry, all alike. If it should happen not to fit John or Henry, he must go without a coat to cover his body. The Hindus have discovered that the absolute can only be realised, or thought of, or stated through the relative, and that images, crosses, crescents are so many symbols, so many pegs, to hang the spiritual idea on. It is not that this help is necessary for everyone, but it is so for many, and those who do not read it themselves, have no right to say that it is wrong."

"One thing I must tell you, Idolatory does not mean in India anything horrible. It is not the mother of harlots. On the other hand, it is the attempt of undeveloped minds to grasp the high spiritual truths."

Gandhi's contribution to idolatory is worth noting: "I have said I do not disbelieve in idol-worship. An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol worship is part of human nature. We hanker after symbolism. Why should one be more composed in a church than elsewhere? Images are an aid to worship. No Hindu considers an image to be God. I do not consider idol worship a sin."

"It is clear from the foregoing that Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets of the world. Hinduism tells every one to worship God according to his own faith and so it lives at peace with

In order to render the spiritual lessons more easy to follow we have the books like the Ramayana and the Mahabharatta with full expression of their truths illustrated in the form of the drama of *Kalidass*. If one is inclined to scoff at the virtues they extol in their mythical symbolism, the words of Dr. Dhalla in '*Our Perfecting World*' are worth recording. "The Bible of no people it was discovered is a single book, but rather a collection of books interwoven by time; a literature in fact. It contains not only the teachings of its prophets, but also records the religious experiences of his immediate disciples as well as of his followers who lived long after him. Thus it has been shown that the various writers had attacked the religious, ethical and social problems of their times in the light of the learning available to them. They could not be expected to determine and solve the problem of all times, because in no two ages are these problems equally alike in every way. The world is growing, society is growing, and life is growing. Growth means constant change of conditions and circumstances, happenings and environments. The solutions and findings of one age cannot, therefore, be equally applicable to another age. No bible moreover has remained sacred in its entirety. It has contained much that is secular and profane. Side by side with lofty moral and profoundly philosophical ideas, there are to be found in these vast literary warehouses garnered theological non-essentials, gross superstitions, narrations of events, happenings, doings, likes and dislikes of people, records of customs and practices passable in the early stages of society, but cruel

and immoral to modern minds, ideas of the physics of nature, fantastic accounts of the rose bowers, and the jasmine groves of Paradise and of the gnawing of scorpions and snakes in Hell, and miscellaneous beliefs and prejudices of the peoples in their evolution from barbarism to civilisation. Books brimming with such imperfections could not be infallible”.

Several centuries, in fact a score of centuries before the dawn of Christianity we perceive the definite influence of Manu the Legistator and founder of the caste system, which has endured to the present day. The caste system is purely the attempt to enforce the theoretical principles; religious divisions of humanity into the social field embracing everyday activities. Annie Besant helps us to understand the spirit and purpose behind the origin and continuance of the caste system. She writes in ‘Four Great Religions’ “Hinduism was made to represent the inner growth in outer form, that men might learn spiritual truths by seeing the external pictures. Let us glance at them in succession, seeing what the soul was meant to learn in each, and how the environment was adapted to advancing evolution. The lowest stage was that of the Shudra where there was little obligation save the duty of obedience and service. The next stage was that of the ‘Vaishya’ where wealth was permitted, its gathering was encouraged, and the soul had to learn unselfishness in the possession of wealth... The rightful use of wealth in service is the lesson of the caste. The third stage was trodden, that of the Kshatrya.



where life itself was to be held as a sacrifice, and not only material goods. And finally comes the caste of the 'Brahmana' wherein nothing that is transitory should have the power to attract, and where in the soul is dwelling in its last body upon earth. And beyond the four castes when these have been lived through, and their lessons learned stands 'sanyassi' who has no caste, nor uses rites nor ceremonies, nor fires, nor possesses anything that belongs to the passing existence."

Again "The first thing that strikes us in the exoteric religion is its all-embracing character, its infinitely varied adaptions to the infinitely varied needs of man. And this because it presents the external universe from the occult standpoint, and because that universe at every point touches each soul at the successive stages of its long evolution. For the very poorest, the lowest, the meanest, the most ignorant, there was something in the faith; for the highest, the most intellectual, the most spiritually advanced there was still teaching in Hinduism. That is one of its distinguishing characteristics, that it has teaching for the most ignorant and the most wise, embracing them all within the same fold of religion."

To supply further proof that the 'caste system' originally was purely a theoretical division we have Pannikar in 'Hinduism and the Modern World'. "Today, apart from ruling families, who claim to be Kshatriyas on the basis of their function of rulership, where is the great caste which is said to be one of the

fourfold divisions of Hinduism? Any group of families or sub-castes, which desires to rise in the social grade, claims Kshatriya-hood. The Kayasthas of North India, a highly educated and powerful community, have announced their intention of regarding themselves as Kshatriyas. The 'Vaisya' caste is equally a non-existent generalisation."

"The fact is that the four-fold castes were merely a theoretical division of society to which the tribes and the family groups were affiliated. The census today gives the names of more than 3000 castes, with innumerable sub-divisions among them. The four fold division is therefore merely a fiction – a platonic myth."

"But though the four estates exist only in idea, the theory of society based on them still governs Hindu life. Everyone of the innumerable sub-castes claims to belong to one of the four. They are all theoretically within the fold of the main ideological castes. The principles of this caste division are therefore of the utmost importance. The ideas of caste rule Hindu life. Its non-realisation in institutions is from the point of view of its evil effects unimportant. The essential principles of caste are:—

- (1) Unchangeable inequality based on birth,
- (2) The gradation of professions and their inequality and,
- (3) Restrictions on marriage outside one's group."

"A man's caste is decided by his birth. From one caste to another there is no passage. If a man is born a Shudra, he remains all his life a Shudra. He must marry only a Shudra and according to caste theory can only carry on the professions allotted to the Shudra. How the Brahmin theorists justify the establishment of a society based on irremovable inequality, under which the vast majority of population was forced to accept the stigma of inferiority need not be discussed here. It constitutes a most interesting example of the overwhelming influence of institutions on the mind of man."

"It is however necessary to add that while the inequality of birth and the prohibitions in regard to marriage continue with undiminished force, the attempt to confine castes to separate professions seems never to have succeeded. The earliest available literature gives instances of Brahmins carrying on the profession of medicine and arms and administration. In the 'Jatakas' the Brahmins are mentioned as traders, hunters, and trappers.

"Masani quotes the case of a Kshatriya prince, Kusa, mentioned in 'Jataka' tales who became an apprentice by turn under a potter, basket-maker, florist and cook. Conversely there have been from the earliest days innumerable cases of men of the lowest position in caste-society obtaining high ranks. We have already mentioned the case of *Maurya* Emperors. Even today a large number of the ruling families in India belong to aboriginal castes, though many have assumed Kshatriya-hood

or at least put forward claims to belong to a higher caste. *Obviously therefore, except as an ideological division the fourfold caste had no existence."*

This analysis of the caste system will prove an indigestible piece of information for Beverly Nichols' English stomach, if not his brain which was responsible for his contention that caste is the sheet anchor of the Hindu ship, which might otherwise have dashed itself to pieces on the rocks of sterner and more solid faiths.

Here we have in a nutshell the finer points of Hindu culture.

### III

We have traced a definite outline of the great Hindu philosophy and find that contrary to Beverly Nichols' assumption that Hinduism is not an endless series of negatives, but offers many positive contributions to spiritual belief which can survive the stern tests of science and rational criticism. The only point of any value put forward by the author of 'Verdict on India' on the subject of Hinduism is that it is *not* Christianity. Unfortunately the barbarian had to acquire an English education in order to appreciate this profound theological fact.

There are millions of people in the West who accept the idea of the Universality of religion, and because they have shed the cloak of prejudice and bigotry, our wise friend deems it as an aspect of

loose thinking. One really wonders whether loose thinking is a product of the universities or whether the average citizen is guilty of the same crime in his simple reasoning when he professes a greater tolerance based on the knowledge of a common humanity.

To believe in the universality of religion one must not necessarily be blind to the teachings of Christ and also be completely ignorant of history and theology. We can scarcely believe that the 'Ego' in Beverly Nichols has aspired so high, as to accuse such learned people as Romain Rolland, Col. Olcott, Madam Blavatsky, Rev. C. F. Andrews, Annie Beasant and a host of other theologians, of going through life with their eyes closed to facts, because they propagated the theme of religious brotherhood. We can add to his already classified stock of cheap metaphors on the subject, which we trust will eventually permeate the encrustation of egotism, and his declared views of the superiority in being 'nice'. In simpler language, the wealth of patronage the Britisher extends to problems he cannot understand under the guise of etiquette and tolerance (a loathsome form of hypocrisy).

Let us present Eastern authorities with their view-points on theology. Swami Vivekananda writes "To the Hindus then, the whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming-up of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances to the same goal. Every religion is only an evolving of God out of the

material man, and the same God is the inspirer of all of them. Why, then are there so many contradictions? They are only apparent says the Hindu. The contradictions come from the same truth adapting itself to the varying circumstances of different natures."

"It is the same light coming through glasses of different colour. And these little variations are necessary for purposes of adaption. But in the heart of everything the same truth reigns. The Lord has declared to the Hindu in his incarnation as Krishna "I am in every religion as the thread through a string of pearls. Wherever thou seest extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power, raising and purifying humanity, know thou that I am there." And what has been the result? I challenge the world to find throughout the whole system of Sanskrit philosophy any such statement, as that the Hindu alone will be saved and not others. Says Vyasa "We find perfect men beyond the pale of our own caste and creed".

Annie Bassant writes "Secondly each religion is treated as coming from the one great Brotherhood which is the steward and custodian of spiritual knowledge. Each is treated as an expression, by some messenger or member of that brotherhood of the eternal spiritual truths, an expression suited to the needs of the time at which it was made, and of the dawning civilisation that it was intended to mould and to guide in its evolution. Each religion has its own mission in the world, and is suited to the nations to whom it is given, and to

the type of civilisation it is to permeate, bringing it into line with the general evolution of the human family. The failure to see this leads to unjust criticism, for an ideally perfect religion would not be suitable to imperfect and partially evolved 'man', and environment must be considered by the Wise, when they plant a new slip of the ancient tree of wisdom."

Appasamy in the Cultural problem mentions "the wisdom of an early Moghal ruler "Akbar" who had the Ramayana and the Mahabharata translated into Persian. He held that every religion contained elements of good. In the beautiful city at Fatehpur - Sikri which he built, he brought together devout and learned men of all faiths—Jesuit fathers, Brahmins and Muslim Doctors".

Asoka, one of the great rulers of India also regarded all religion in a similar light.

Sir Abdul Quadir "In spite of the fact that there are radical differences between the tenets of the many religions prevailing in India, there is an underlying unity among them, especially in the sphere of spiritual mysticism". He gives another instance "There is a passage in the Holy Qoran which says that God could have so moulded humanity as to have only one religion but he preferred to test mankind; to see how they use their gifts of understanding and discernment. It appears that this diversity of thought is a part of the scheme of things and is quite in keeping with the scheme of

nature in other directions. The trees, the flowers and the fruits are a significant illustration of nature's love of variety, with their different colours, and flavours and perfumes. Let us recognise that all religions have a right to exist with this broad basis of fellowship, let us study and respect them."

Masani in "The Cultural Problem" endorses this view-point. "It may yet take years of progress before the religion of emotion and irrationalism gives place to religion of reason and the doctrine of humanity, and dedication to the love and services of one's fellow-men. Meanwhile, in different spheres of life, bigots will continue to hamper the fellowship of men and the fellowship of faiths. But despite such obstacles the world will forge its way, as it has in the past, to the goal of human unity."

Sir Jogendra Singh contributes on this subject in "The Cultural Problem", he writes: "Religion unquestionably refines our nature, enlarges the sphere of our sympathies in time and eternity, and our relations to the great beneficent cause of all the one God. Religion, therefore, cannot be a source of discords, since it is the true source of concord. The great religious teachers speak with one voice. There is no discord between the sweetness of Buddha and his Eight-fold path of salvation, the love for humanity that lighted up every word that Jesus Christ uttered, the declaration of the prophets of Islam, that 'Whoever rejects evil and believes in God, hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold' and the Sikh Gurus' affirmation."



"In the company of saints

All sense of otherness departs

There is no stranger, there is no enemy,

There is a feeling of oneness with all."

"Alas! It is the uncultivated soil of the human mind which fails to nurse the seed of religion, and transforms religion into a sect, and by doing so rejects without examining the truth of religion and its saving power. Sect breeds pure prejudice rendering sterile the soil of spirit, killing life's worth and humanity's advance".

Finally we have the great Parsi authority on Religion. Dr. Dhalla in this "*Our Perfecting world*"— "The process of bringing the most distant parts of the world together has already begun, will more and more bring races and peoples face to face. Every race will increasingly effect and influence every other race, intellectually, morally and spiritually. Cultural ideas and religious ideals will no more remain the exclusive possession of any race or organization. They will become intertwined and interspersed, and will permeate everywhere. Religious ideals, apart from men and women who claim their ownership for themselves, are creedless and colourless. However watchfully they may be guarded, they elude the grasp of their zealot owners, and cleave unto those who aspire to them. Thus will religion continue mutually assimilating and absorbing the best that is embodied in every one of them. A synthesis of all

that is best in all religions will form man's future religion and mankind will not find it possible to think in terms of this or that religion, but only of Religion."

"Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism said there were no Hindus and no Mussulmans, and so the blessed prophets repeat from the ethereal heavens that God knows his children, not in divided groups with differentiating religious designations, but as one great human federation, united in God's universal religion to come."

Must we now in the already demonstrated manner of Nicholism dub these authorities on religion and culture as loose thinkers of the East. The answer could probably be supplied by the august Beverly Nichols himself, who makes the proud boast of keeping his eyes wide open.

The doctrine of the *universality* of religion is comforting to every rational thinking man. It is warm, cosy and soothing to the spirit that is anxious to escape from the morass of bigotry and spiritual pettiness. but it must be a very disquieting doctrine to the spirit which seeks to discriminate for the sole purpose of material gain in one form or another.

We are asked to compare the respective symbols of Hinduism and Christianity, as described by the author embodying Ganesh the deity in the shape of an elephant, and Jesus Christ on the cross.

To make this ridiculous comparison assume a point of absurdity, he quotes a foremost Hindu in the Congress C. Rajagopalachari - ex-president of the Congress (a politician mark you, not a priest or a theologian). "People of the west might not find beauty in Ganesh and might say that the figure was funny, and that at the best it was a mascot. But to the Hindu Ganesh represents the sense of universal unity..beauty and ugliness are combined to make one ineffable beauty in him. He has the body of a fat man and the head of the elephant, with a mouse as his vehicle. He is fond of good eating, but he is not as stupid as a westerner might suggest. We are a curious people: let us continue to be curious, that is my prayer."

He takes the bare symbol of Hinduism, but let us examine the symbol of Christ. We agree that *coupled* with his last words "Forgive them for they know not what they do" is the most beautiful inspiration the world can possess, but a postscript is essential "and continue to do". Despite the lesson the Christian does little to live up to his ideal. The pages of Christian history is bespattered with blood, persecution and inquisitions. We have another westerner's view on the same subject of symbolism. A religious authority at that. Joseph McCabe in "*The God of War*" — "They never inquire whether *in fact* this biblical religion did anything to mitigate or reduce the horrors of war and callousness in Europe. Here I give facts, as they may be seen in any authoritative history. The Christian era has seen the reign of brutality during:

an immeasurably longer period than any other civilisation ever endured. Its crucifix is the symbol of the crucifixion of man. Its hell is reflected in a hell upon earth."

Instead of the Hindu apologising *for* his god, we find the Christian in the unique position of having to apologise *to* his God, for his feet have long since strayed from the path of love and meekness.

#### IV

We are still being shown what Hinduism is not, rather than what it *is*. The comparison of symbols was dramatic, in fact it was a literary boomerang, for in spite of his efforts to show the bare figure of Ganesh without its message to its devotees and the symbol of Christ with his last words, the literary conjuring trick failed to come up to expectation.

Let us accept his invitation. "We will let the critic make his point. It is not of great importance, for we are not really concerned with idols, but with ideals. And now that the time has come to examine those ideals, we shall find ourselves on such firm ground that no critic will be able to dislodge us."

"By their fruits, shall ye judge them" said Christ. We will obey this injunction. We will put the fruits of Christianity and Hinduism side by side. This will be no mere clash of symbols,

it will be a clash of systems, a war of two worlds—two worlds that can never meet.” (*V on India*).

In his arguments to live up to the quotation of Lord Morley “*that little by little, Christianity creeps into the Statute book*”, which according to him precisely describes the trend of modern legislation in civilised countries. He dilates on the advantages that Christianity has brought in its train, in the generalisation that every British and American advance in the last century, every step towards the light has been a step towards applied Christianity.

He cites the Child Marriage Restraint Act better known as the Sarda Act, Suttee, Thuggee. Infanticide and enforced widowhood as the issues over which Christianity defeated the most venerable elements of Hindu life.

To lift the darkness from this erstwhile critic's mind let us examine each of the instances advanced and see if the indictment is justified.

It might seem terrible to western minds of the description of little girls at the shrine of the Monkey Temple in Benares, imploring the idols for the blessings of fertility. But a closer investigation of the life and propensities of the Indians leads us to believe that it is not so terrible as it seems. For one thing it is difficult to establish the age of ninety nine per cent of Indian Children owing to the complete lack of public records or data in connection with births etc. The only

course left open is to judge by appearance and there again it cannot be done with any degree of certainty. For instance the Pathan at twelve can quite easily be mistaken for sixteen owing to the extra-ordinary size of the physique and development of the limbs. Coming down to the south we find that a child of twelve looks more in the region of seven or eight, owing to its diminutive size. The reason for this disparity amongst the inhabitants of India lies chiefly in the climatic condition obtaining in different parts of the country; their habits and their varied dietary systems. A diligent study of Professor McCarrison, on Indian dietetics will convince one of the value that diet plays in the types of Indians so prominent in the different provinces, thereby strengthening our argument. Secondly in the East puberty comes early between the ages of eleven to thirteen, whereas in the West girls become young ladies of sixteen to eighteen on an average before the first symptoms of puberty and approaching womanhood begin to manifest itself. Even from the age of six onwards the Indian child takes on a more mature and adult outlook of life temperamentally, and by the age of eleven is capable of performing the arduous tasks of a housewife successfully, long before her European sister thinks of leaving her childish or girlish habits on the thresh-hold of responsible womanhood.

Most communities entered their children into marriage contracts or betrothals to ensure mates for them, owing to shortage of females in their particular caste. Though these ceremonies were

performed at a tender age, they usually continued to live apart, till they were physically able to discharge the responsibilities of the marriage union. In cases where union has taken place between sexes, with a great disparity of age resulting in injury to the female, it has been the weak link in this social system. However 1929 saw the end of the practice by the introduction of the Sarda Act into the legislatures, fixing the marriage age of males at eighteen and of females at fourteen, as the minimum age qualifications for matrimonial contracts. As was expected a storm of protest arose from the ranks of the orthodox and conservative members of the Hindu fold as this act was regarded as an encroachment upon the traditions that they cherished.

*Suttee* was a natural outcome of the Hindu social system prevailing in the early days, as the lot of a widow was unenviable. On the decease of her husband she forfeited all rights to his estate. Her bare livelihood depended on the charity of his relatives which they gave begrudgingly. She was compelled to wear the marks of widowhood i.e. draped in austere clothes with the head shaved. All the menial work in the household was relegated to her, and she was expected to live a life of complete retirement. Deprived of all the amenities of a comfortable and independent existence, it is not surprising that the victim in despair decided to immolate herself on her husband's funeral pyre. This practice culminated in an agitation by Raja Ram Mohan Roy a member of the Hindu Law Reform Committee under the chairmanship of Sir B. N. Rau,

with the result that it was abolished by the legislature.

*Thuggee* were professional religious assassins, whose activities lit up the pages of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Their activities ended in the middle of the nineteenth century. It would be interesting to read an account of the religious, political and social practices of the west during this corresponding period. Religion in Europe too often wore the mask of bigotry and cruelty.

*Infanticide* of female children at birth was a common feature of the early Hindu period among the poorer classes. Several factors contributed to this abuse of human rights, one of which is the economic poverty of the masses. Owing to the dowry system in vogue amongst certain segments of society, the gift of a daughter to a man of poor means was a heavy liability, since a suitable suitor could not be found to enter the matrimonial state without an adequate dowry. Secondly the complete absence of the means of restricting births, and facilities for obtaining proper sex instructions placed the married couple at the whims of fate and though they found it hard to support themselves, it made it well-nigh impossible to support the unwelcome additions to the family. Again daughters were not regarded with the same importance attached to male children. Hence the Hindu sociologist never had to deal with the problem of the unmarried daughter; the economically independent wife and the educated widow, in the earlier times due to this prevention of the preponderance of females.



'Enforced' widowhood was in force till the move initiated in the reform campaign by Raja Ram Mohan Roy with Sir B. N. Rau, who fought for the Widow Remarriage Act. This short-coming in the Hindu social field had its counterpart in some sections of Muslim society as well. To witness S. Natarajan writes in "Social Problem" - "The prejudice against the remarriage of widows was deep seated, and strange to record not confined to Hindus. The late Begum of Bhopal writes in her autobiography: "My mother's remarriage was an act contrary to the customs of the Afghan race ... The Mohammedans of India had rigidly adhered to the customs of the Afghans and this had now taken such a hold on society that any breach of it was regarded as a heinous sin. This feeling was shared by men and women alike, even those whose ideas had been modified by Western Education, never permitted second marriages in their own families and up to the present day the practice is viewed with disfavour by nearly all Muhammedans of Afghan descent." Neither second marriage nor the remarriage of widows is looked on with disfavour by Islam."

If all these practices were the custom in the earlier centuries and terminated over a score of years ago, we fail to see where it comes under the purview of 'Verdict on India' penned in 1944 and pretending to deal with the problems of every field, as witnessed by the author in the same year of grace. If he maintains that their abolition was through the humanitarian efforts of the Christian, in the shape of the ubiquitous Britisher, it would

be worth quoting K. N. Pannikar in *Hinduism and the Modern world*.—"Till the East India Company, through the agitation of Rammohan Roy, took up the question of Suttee and of *infanticide*, there was no case of the exercise of State legislative authority for the purpose of prohibiting anti-social customs. The experiences of the Mutiny however, persuaded the British Government; that it was safer to follow the line of least resistance and permit the Hindus to wallow in the mire of their own social customs. The policy of non-intervention in social matters continued unbroken till the Montagu Chelmsford Reform and has only been partially modified by it."

Again "After the first experiments in reform by the abolition of Sutee, Infanticide and other inhuman practices, the British authorities came to the conclusion that social legislation was too dangerous an experiment for an alien Government to undertake. Consequently from the establishment of the Indian Legislative Council in 1861 to the Montagu Chelmsford Reform in 1921, the record of the Government is singularly barren in the field of social legislation. The few cases of legislation like the Age of Consent Act and the Anand Marriage Act were the outcome of popular pressure and not of any desire on the part of the Government to eradicate evils in Hindu society." The latter part of this statement will prove too much for the mental capacity of the conservative Beverly Nichols. We are obliged to ask him if Raja Rammohan Roy, Sir B. N. Rau and, a host of reformers in the Hindu social field, were Chris-

tians, or that the popular pressure alluded to came from the Christians in India or Blighty? The answer is superfluous.

In pursuit of the generalisation that "Little by little Christianity creeps *into* the Statute book", let us offer a contrast, which is so significant; its implications are of such grave consequence, that the reader is requested to ponder the message of the generalisation and try to reconcile it with the history of Christianity past and present coupled with the substance of his own personal experiences. The religious persecutions in England under King Henry VIII; Edward, and Mary of the Tudor period; The Spanish Inquisition and the Protestant movement in Europe. Gangster rule and the racial discrimination of the whites against the coloured elements of the United States of America, where lynching and slavery have had their day. The Amritsar massacre, the crawling order, the rule of four hundred million people by fifty million British who are determined to preside over their destinies against the will of the populace under such egotistic hoaxes of a "sacred trust". "civilising mission" "protecting the minorities" and "preventing the shedding of native blood etc of India." Belsen, Dachau Buchenwald etc of Germany where the bible is still the best seller. The use of the atomic bomb by the Christian nations. Reuter's reports of the effects of the atomic-bomb is sufficient testimony of man's inhumanity to man which compelled a high dignitary of the Church of England to refuse to take part in the service of Thanks-Giving on V. J. Day in England as reported by the Daily Mirror.

Reuter's reports are reproduced here—London, Sept. 5 (Reu) - "Survivors of Hiro - Shima hate white men from the moment the Atomic bomb was dropped, cables the "Daily Express" special correspondent, from the devastated city."

"The counted dead, he says, number 53,000, another 30,000 are missing, which means certainly dead; 13,000 were seriously injured and would probably all die.— They are dying at the rate of 100 daily."

"People are dying in hospitals from uncanny after effects. Their health began to fail. They lost appetite. Their hair fell out. Bluish spots appeared on their bodies and bleeding began from the ear, nose and mouth. In every case the victim died. Hardly a building can be seen for 25 or 30 miles."

London Sept. 8—"The Japanese news agency announced today that the atom bomb claimed 244,000 out of Hiroshima's population of 250,000.

"Only 6,000 citizens of Hiroshima escaped death or injury, according to the latest figures released by the Hiroshima Prefectural Government authorities today, the agency added"—Reuter.

Are these the steps which Beverly Nichols proudly claims that Britain and America are taking towards the light; the steps towards applied Christianity? If Christ gathered the children unto him saying "of such are the kingdom of heaven" then that bit of theological high-pressure

salesmanship of 'wrestling with the devil, and building fortresses like Geneva to keep him out' is quite farcical. If 'Christ could walk without shame or grief among the ruins of Geneva', we would like to visualise his feelings when he walked in the graveyard of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

It would be more to the point if the generalisation ran as follows "*Little by little Christianity creeps around the statute book*", and the devil began to build fortresses to keep the Christian out with his diabolical V. Bombs, Atomic Bombs and concentration camps.

No matter what arguments are put forward by protagonists of the Atomic bomb for 'its use in warfare, it plainly shows how far the spirit of Christianity or the humane feelings for the fate of women and children and defenceless civilians were submerged by the barbarous and primeval instincts of man whose feet have strayed from the path of love and religion.

#### IV

Beverly Nichols delights in giving a very picturesque account of the *Devadassīs*, a practice of ancient Hindu social rites of dedicating young girls to the temples. He declares that the prostitutes have been driven out of the big cities, particularly since the war which has flooded India with Amercian troops. He adds his pious observation that these gilded creatures who pander to the lust of any pilgrim, who strays from the beaten path,

have been pushed out by the Congress, who could not afford to permit young men from Milwaukee writing home about the orgies of unadulterated Hinduism, as it would not be good propaganda for the Congress who are bent on presenting India, as a great spiritual country, prevented from giving the world her inspiration of spirituality by the 'chains of the British.'

We are constrained to laud the efforts of this critic, who persists in using Nelson's blind eye, even in his study of such little cameos of India's presumed spirituality. He confuses ordinary prostitution with the ancient practice of *Devadassisi*, for he commits himself fully by asserting that the Devadassisi are a war time reality..

Anyone connected with the war effort or maintained their interest in the progress of the war through the medium of the newspapers will recall that American soldiers landed in Karachi, because of the danger to shipping in the Indian Ocean. Their moves to the China war front led them to use such places as Delhi, Agra, Gaya, Calcutta and its suburbs; and to the most casual student of Indian social history the fact that the practise of *devadassisi* was confined almost to the southern peninsular of India needs no repetition. Hence how could the American G. I., who hardly cares how sex in a foreign country is served up to him, whether dressed in the latest uplift brassiers, with the only too well-tailored dress of Christianity, or the skirt and loin cloth of Hinduism, tell the spiritual difference in that form of lease-

tend unless instructed by John Bull on the virtues and vices of the East. In any case the Congress had resigned from the ministries before the advent of such historic occasions as the arrival of American troops on Indian soil, and that poet Laureate of Indian affairs Beverly Nichols. We who come under the category of the off-white (a description used by Beverly Nichols for a tanned skin) have now learnt through the efforts of the author of 'Verdict on India' that the Congress is fighting for India's salvation on the political platform of spirituality using the *devadassis* problem as an election stunt. Very interesting indeed when the practice of *devadassis* was abolished in 1928 by a bill being successfully introduced in the Madras Legislative Assembly by Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, and similar measures had been adopted throughout British India.

Mahatma Gandhi writes in (C. F. Andrews, on the 'Life and Ideas of Mahatma Gandhi') "That being my conception of Hinduism, I have never been able to reconcile myself to Untouchability. I have always regarded it as an excrescence. It is true that it has been handed down to us from generations, but so are many evil practices even to this day. I should be ashamed to think that the dedication of temple girls to virtual prostitution was a part of Hinduism."

So we gather that this practice is solely an accretion to Hinduism without any authentic religious authority behind it. S. Natranjan in 'Social Problems' gives a precise definition "When the

social reform movement was started it had to deal with the problem of the *devadāssīs*. These women who were dedicated to lives of singing and dancing, were engaged to perform at domestic and social festivities. Around them was built what is known as the family system in contrast to commercialised prostitution. The Anti-naught movement was started in 1894-5 in Madras, and the pioneers of the movement were attacked as vandals bent on destroying the ancient art of music and the dance. The movement attained a large measure of success, and the criticism has been answered by the fact that today these arts are being studied by respectable members of society. The knowledge which was kept restricted to a caste is now being diffused through schools throughout the country."

On reading these extracts we discover that in his attack on the Hindu religion and its practice, he has wittingly or unwittingly included ordinary prostitution in his scathing comments on a practice which has long since ceased to exist. In all big cities of India a certain part of the town area is set aside for the abode and practice of licenced 'ladies of easy virtue'. Many an Englishman or foreigner, for that matter, from such walks of life as service in the Mercantile Marine and Army etc. will testify to a fact that ordinary prostitution has its recruits from practically every community in India, regardless of their religious outlook.

We have no fear of what reception Milwaukee will accord to news of the oldest profes-



sion in the world in its manifestation on the Indian Continent, for if the extracts in 'Uncle Sham' on American morality, by Kanhaya Lal Gauba failed to curb the emotions and impulses of the average American, nothing will disturb their complacency.

We could also recommend to Beverly Nichols to divert his attention to his own country and see the girls in Piccadilly, the dock areas of Liverpool and South Hampton, the famous London Bridge, Hyde, Park etc. soliciting openly for trade. Like the simile if the mountain will not come to Mahomed, Mahomed will have to go to the mountain.' In India the prostitute waits patiently for trade with a single electric light above her head in the bazaar, to advertise that she is open for engagement, and in the West they seek their prey on the streets, the theatre, the cafes and the bars. Let him study the moral lapses of the masses in the gutter press (as labelled by the high minded); their behaviour in the black-outs and the air-raid shelters and see if it can be reconciled with the teachings of Christ. Let us see how the injunction of the bible can be by-passed when adultery and fornication is so rife in the larger towns of Great Britain. We have no doubt as to Beverly Nichols ability to achieve this miracle with his pen.

We would welcome his explanations of the League of Nations report on the *Rehabilitation of Adult Prostitutes*, the functions of the successful 'Houses of Bethany' conducted by Dominican nuns based on the Christian doctrine of sin and redemption. The Prophylactoria of Russia, the

'Common-law wives in America, and the human 'stud' farms of Germany, which deemed it a national duty to reproduce outside wedlock for the benefit of the state; or see a postscript by him on 'Maria Monk'.

We do not seek to defend or condone the abnoxious excrescence of *Devadasis* like Mr. Ranga Iyer, nor do we go so far as to belittle the teachings of Christ, because its devotees err on the score of morality.

## V

We have defined Hinduism as compared with the modern presentation of other religions, we find a striking similarity of superstitious accretions to every philosophy, but if we are to accept his version that "Hinduism has accumulated to itself a mass of purely human superstitions, deifying instinct, sanctifying convenience and giving authority to human passion, till it found itself saddled with several thousand gods, some with the most disreputable characters of greed and lust, and as hideous as the instincts which created them," then a comparison of the moral issues pertaining in the west with those governing Hindu social life would provide the best answer.

This harsh criticism by Beverly Nichols in his attempt to justify Christianity by declaring that "Christian children are not taught to prostrate themselves at phallic symbols in the shadow of of fantastic obscenities; neither are they taught to

hate and despise their brethren, nor shrink from their very shadow," forgot entirely to mention that it did not forbid them to criticise and ridicule the religious and social practices of their brethren. (According to Christianity mankind is one vast brotherhood, or must the Indians be regarded as natives; subjects of His Majesty the King of England and as such be regarded as the 'Untouchables of the Empire', only fit to receive such rewards as the Pegging bill and the refusal of admission in the exclusive hotels of England, to witness the Hari Singh Gour case).

If in England they are not taught these things, one is led to wonder how they acquired the art of ruling another country against the consent of its people, and despising its culture. How they erected gymkhanas and clubs all over India, with rules to keep out the coloured man who was not vetted and failed to measure up to the accepted standard of eligibility, in regard to wealth and influence, and above all to keep out poor Tommy Atkins who fought with his back to the wall in both wars and died to preserve their silly distinctions of social contact.

Probably we will be told that all this has the religious sanction of Jesus Christ. Now we realise how effective is the teaching of English children to refrain from despising their brethren, when we consider the bitter complaint of the Indian, embodied in Prof. T. K. Dutts book "The Loin Cloth Laid Bare", "and what could be a darker hour than this, asks the thinking Indian who has

observed, rightly or wrongly, half-starved, half-naked, millions of India living for decades on the verge of death. They felt enslaved by an alien people, and they even saw the tallest among them being humiliated by the petty underlings of a sovereign overseas. Not so conscious of the political and economic issues, the masses were alive to the affronts to their centuries old culture. They have heard, half amused, half-indignant, the missionaries of the ruling race calumniating the Hindu Gods; they have seen churches rise where once stood their temples. The high caste, the priveleged, the upper crust, noticed the *Mahabharatta* being replaced by the *Iliad* on the shelves of seats of learning, and *Kalidasa* by Shakespeare. The Sanskrit Pandit has had to learn an alien tongue to get a job. The aristocrat realised with a deep sense of humiliation, that he must give up the costume of his forefathers and ape the European in order to earn a respectable living. The Brahmin and the Untouchable, the caste and the out-caste, the men and the class, all alike felt that every insult to their culture was an affront to Mother India."

By way of Postscript:

It is indeed a matter of regret that this bright star of English journalism did not come over with the Salvation Army in 1882 on the S. S. *Anacanda*. His flair for criticism and the manner in which he wields his pen would have earned him a prominent place in that famous society. His actions inspired by his religious zeal, might easily

have eclipsed the brilliance of his predecessors in the field of conversion, as India was ripe for the full play of Christian propaganda by those bent on a 'civilising mission'.

Instead of a psycho-analyst studying the deities of the Hindu pantheon, it would serve a worthier purpose if his energies were directed to analysing the idiosyncracies of British journalists of the Beverly Nichols calibre. Instead of finding in Hinduism the crystallisation into the shape of men or monsters, the representations of almost every vice known to man, he would discover that despite the fact that one fifth of the human race has found such vices through the presumed agencies of their Gods, the other four fifths had found and practised the said vices without divine help of any sort.

It would be well for this profound scholar to remember that religion in any sense is purely *faith* which transcends reason. Subject any belief to scientific tests on the basis of rational arguments and mathematical calculations, and it begins to fall to pieces. There are aspects in every creed which are beyond precise human definition, as it merges into the spiritual and must be accepted if life is to have any meaning, otherwise it ends on an indefinite theme of the 'hen and the egg'.

As a parting shot we quote Dr. Dhalla again in "Our Perfecting world" "Zoroastrianism is the most optimistic living religion on the face of the

earth. If a man born in this faith is by nature of a gloomy and brooding caste of mind, his spirit will be inwardly seeking its peace in some other pessimistic philosophy of life and will find its calm in the Sufi or Yoga principles of life, or in the secret doctrines of Theosophy or of any esoteric teachings congenial to its mood. Christianity preaches humility and meekness, passivity and peace, in terms rarely equalled in clarity by any other. Yet the Christian nations of the West, virile and aggressive by temperament, are on the whole, the least fitted of all peoples of the world to realise the Christian ideal of passivity."

Swami Vivekananda said in his Chicago Speech. "The Hindus have their faults. They sometimes have their exceptions but mark this, they are always for punishing their own bodies and never for cutting the throats of their neighbours. If the Hindu fanatic burns himself on the pyre he never lights the fire of inquisition. And even this cannot be laid at the door of his religion any more than the burning of witches can be laid at the door of Christianity."

## CHAPTER VII.

### Journalism in India.

To the Westerner the Indian newspaper appears to be in its infancy due to the fact of its limited circulation with a maximum scope of a few thousands against the millions as is so common to the newspaper trade in the West.

What are the factors which lead to this poor record of minimum circulation. A minute study of this peculiarity reveals the causes clearly; (a) Out of a total population of 400,000,000 people hardly 6 per cent are literate even in the most generous sense of the word. (b) There are over 300 languages and dialects and this limits the circulation of a newspaper written in any particular vernacular. (c) The Indian towns are very widespread with several hundred miles between them, and to achieve an all-India popularity by any one newspaper is almost an impossibility, owing to the cost involved in the maintenance of such a vast organization. (Most papers are the result of private enterprise with no state or party backing). Several days are needed to traverse the length and breadth of India and before a newspaper reaches its destination, the reports are several days old. (d) The radio has become a potent competitor in the field of news owing to its ability to receive its news before the presses and to reach every nook and corner simulatneously.

(In Europe it is easy to achieve a wider circulation, because of the compactness of the cities and the means of easy communications. This compactness being possible through the nature of its climatic conditions, which can allow congestion) (e) Lack of regularity. (f) The vocations of most of the literate populace are such that the pleasure of perusing the daily news over one's breakfast is a pleasure unknown to many citizens, belonging to the middle and working classes. (g) Papers are not edited with a view to satisfying every section of the public; they seldom devote any section to features'. In their planning or lack of planning they neglect to include articles of human interest. Often a few minutes suffices to read the dry as dust reports of everyday news devoid of any colour. If in the West they run short of news they create news in order to keep their readers interested in their daily numbers.

Again why should this 'laissez faire' policy continue to dominate the newspaper world? The answer is simple. Journalism in India is not looked upon in the same terms as other professions. The wages are low to start with and even if a man reaches the top, he seldom manages to save enough on which to retire. In short it is synonymous with poor prospects, without pensions, provident funds or gratuities and the necessary safeguards for the present and the future. The element of *insecurity* haunts the journalist like a spectre night and day, because of the instability of their jobs.



The opinion of the man in the street on journalism can seldom be regarded as flattering to the profession. To him it connotes the reporting of sports and race meetings, social gatherings and charitable functions at a meagre Rs. 10 per report and the lifting of news from the world famous agencies and the associated presses of foreign countries.

This continued policy which keeps the journalists on the dry bread line attracts very poor material to the profession on the average, because of the sacrifices entailed in the pursuit of their calling. As love alone will not feed a man these men who form the backbone of the daily newspaper such as the reporters, proof readers, lino-type operators, grind away at their jobs for the princely sum of Rupees fifty or a little above, because of the paucity of better jobs with which to improve their status in life. What can one expect from men who work with their belts tightened to the last notch, after they have trudged or cycled all over the country-side under a tropical sun to garner their news and have it edited.

Journalism besides offering no encouragement to the people who serve it so faithfully, is one long spell of sacrifice and drudgery.

Now we come to the position occupied by the press in its importance to the state. The influence it exerts on fashioning the future of a country. In the West society and even the State is afraid of the press and its potentiality, whereas in India we

see just the reverse. Due to the number of restrictions, gagging acts, press censorship and the influence that can be brought to bear on a newspaper by some members in responsible positions, the directors invariably suffer from a chronic state of timidity. The standard is lowered considerably when private individuals pay to have their addresses and activities published regardless of how the press views their contribution to the welfare of society.

In the United Kingdom politicians and big combines own certain newspapers and besides serving the interests of its readers, they continue to advertise their policy political or economical, whilst criticising the policy of the Government or of any of their rivals. This criticism leads to a healthy adjustment of policy to the needs of the administration, whereas in this country the politicians seldom require the help of a newspaper, for it turns out that their vested interests in the country are sufficient to enable them to dispense with advertisement, and it invariably turns out that their policies are not based on their personal convictions, but on their ambitions, in which case one often finds them in the ranks of the party in power or the Opposition, whichever is expedient to them. Among a large proportion of politicians, political fidelity sounds strange to their self-interested minds.

There is no hope of betterment for the press in India unless the economic standard of the masses is raised and the newspapers see fit to adapt

their policy to the times in line with other countries, and above all make the profession of journalism worth following through the granting of higher emoluments and financial safeguards for its staff.

In our study of this problem the Madrassi emerges with high honours in the journalistic field closely followed by the Bengalee. He stands head and shoulders above his contemporaries in his mastery of the English language, which he weaves in such a skilful manner as to be the envy of the leading journalists in the world. Beverly Nichols contention that an interview in India by the press is fatiguing because one has to spell most of the words over three syllables, does not hold against a majority of reporters of responsible news organs, for if this were a fact we would have to engage a thousand Beverly Nichols to do the spelling and editing to achieve the state of progress already arrived at by the press. The editorials bear sufficient testimony to this fact. This disparity of talent is responsible for the shoddy nature of construction in some newspapers, as India has yet to achieve a standard of uniformity in the journalistic field.

It must have been a novel experience for Beverly Nichols to find that his presence in the offices of the Bombay Sentinel created quite a sensation, so much so, that they crowded round the table, entwining around his knees and breathing down his neck. Later when he addressed crowds of journalists the reception accorded to his speech

was naturally far from what he expected. He found that they had no intention of listening when his topic of conversation veered round to the Mr. and Mrs. Smiths in England and their war-time activities. Who in India except the Englishman cared what they did, what they thought about or what plans they had for the future? When the burning question in this country is when the English will live up to that proclamation that the goal of British intention in India was the creation of a self-governing institution, either through the medium of Dominion Statute for the present, or through complete independence.

If question after question was hurled at the speaker, and shrieks and yells rent the air, it was nothing to be surprised at, for in his calling of journalism or by virtue of his English environments he must have witnessed meetings in Hyde Park, or must we be compelled to swallow his idea that he believed and expected his audience to behave in the best traditions of a Sunday School meeting of children under ten. One point seems to have escaped the author's brilliant observation, that the prominent characteristic of Indian conversation or discourse is the raising of their voices and the bad habit of speaking simultaneously. To most Europeans an ordinary conversation can quite easily be mistaken for a heated exchange of views bordering on a physical tussle. If he could not answer the questions fired at him, it boils down to only one thing, that the answer given would have sounded lame even if it came from his lips.

It is all very well to say "I was face-to-face with hatred—mass hatred. Here was the slogan "Quit India" come to life. These were the men who went out in the darkness and chalked things up on walls. Here in spirit if not in practice was the vanguard of the ignoble army of saboteurs. Here was Hindu nationalism naked and unadorned and to use a vulgar phrase - it didn't strip well."

"The Chairman tried to quell the riot. For another few minutes I struggled on. It was useless. There was murder in those men's eyes. Fee, fo, fum, they smelt the blood of an Englishman. It was a startling revelation, to one who had come like myself with the idea of an informal chat over a glass of beer." But it may be as well to bear in mind that this country belongs to the Indians by birth inheritance, which by far outweighs an Englishman's claim to it by intrigue, conquest and hypocrisy, for in the latter instance it is stripped of the finer sentiments of patriotism. Not by any stretch of imagination could these men be regarded as the vanguard of ignoble army of saboteurs, for they had and still have the interests and freedom of their mother-land at heart. They did not dare chalk up things on the walls in daylight owing to the institution of the all-embracing Defence of India regulations. Even Beverly Nichol himself would have done the same thing under the cover of darkness if the colour of his skin had been tanned and he happened to be a son of this soil. To read his indictment of the Indians who gave vent to their feelings as saboteurs makes us wonder

for how long the 'Englishman' will keep up his hypocrisy of dealing out two sets of morals. Let me make my meaning clearer. In Europe when the Nazi hordes over-ran their neighbours the chalking up of 'V' signs and sabotage featured in the life and policy of the partisans, who performed their nefarious work under the cover of darkness, England encouraged the activities of these men by radio broadcasts, supplies, and equipment to enable them to continue with their work of destruction. Their virtues were extolled and they were regarded as the 'heroes' of their country. In India these men who lacked the means of sabotage as employed on a major scale in Europe, and the necessary courage to do it are classified as *ignoble*. How quickly the quality of nobleness in the west, undergoes a radical change when it expresses itself in the East.

If there was murder in their eyes; it is indeed a pity they did not give full expression to their feelings, for sabotage in this sense would have done the motherland a great service and blue book 'Verdict on India' would have been written by some other literary adventurer, with a due regard for facts. We have smelt the blood of an Englishman, but unlike the tendency on the continent Hindu nationalism or Indian nationalism would not be a party to shedding it, for the simple reason apart from religious considerations, its fight is solely with the system and not with the Englishman as an individual. They have no bitterness against the Americans, but wonder why in a country which advertises the equality of all men and the cherished 'freedom'

of democracy, this discrimination of race and colour should persist in matters of social contact, and what is above understanding is that Roosevelt can be a signatory to the "Atlantic Charter" on behalf of the American nation, when that "Charter" is a dead letter in the *History* of the world. It promised more than the democracies could give.

If the reports in the *Times of India* that "We can only admire the amazing tolerance and good humour with which Nichols faced the terrific barrage"; the observation of the *Indian Annalist*, "We only hope that Nichols will not judge India by this disgusting treatment at the hands of half-baked journalists seeking yellow press notoriety" and the *Sunday Standard's* Statement "If this is the reception we propose to accord to visitors, who have incidentally, given no cause for offence, we cannot expect to be treated seriously by world public opinion", are of any solace to Beverly Nichols, we can only add how far these reports erred on the side of charity when others had a vague premonition of things to come, and which came to roost in the year of grace 1944 in the guise of "Verdict on India." We have his judgment complete with the Englishman's reputation of tolerance and good humour and he has given offence enough.

Compare this description with that of press report on his address in the Taj Mahal Hotel of Bombay to the citizens of that city insulting their architectrual taste. We quote him fully—"It is what the Indians like. No.....that is wrong.

They neither like nor dislike. They are in different. And it seems to be impossible to shake them out of their indifference." "I once tried to do so at a mass meeting at the Taj Mahal Hotel. I stood up before an audience which included the majority of Bombay's intelligentsia and insulted their city in the most uncompromising terms for nearly twenty minutes. The abuse was laid on with a trowel. To make it more stinging, it was extremely personal. I mentioned name after name suggesting that the residence of one famous millionaire resembled a malformed wedding cake and that the house of another was a *gilded mouse trap*. Any self-respecting horse, I hinted would refuse to pass these places, but would prefer to rush violently into the sea. I even advocated sabotage claiming that any member of the audience who chose to blow up these things would be conferring real benefit on suffering humanity."

"These remarks one would have thought were reasonably succinct. It would be difficult to interpret them as compliments; unless one lapsed into the language of the bargee it would be hard to express oneself more forcibly." And his subsequent reaction to the newspaper reports the following morning. "On the following day I bought the newspapers expecting splash headlines. After all, the journalists ought to know a good story when they met one. Here was a person—me—whom they had made the Oracle of the hour, for reasons best known to themselves. The oracle had spoken—nay had roared, hissed, spat in their faces. And the roaring, hissing, spitting had



been about something which concerned them all, their own houses, their own streets, their own places of business."

"But not one newspaper considered it worthy of a single paragraph. Oh, yes, the splash headlines were there all right, the mild little political platitudes, in which the rest of the speech had consisted, were set in type which challenged the assault on Kharkov."

Where may we ask was the traditional fiery temper of Indian journalists? What had happened to damp their murderous intentions? On whose side lies the blame when a man stoops to insult a meeting that is calm and docile, or a journalist who could not get a satisfactory answer?

We can only register wonder at the exhibition of tolerance and good humour on the part of the journalists and the Bombay intelligentsia who should have used brick bats to hurl at the meeting, instead of mere questions.

## II

We have his harsh remarks which are supposed to be the result of bitter experience. His version that nothing in America, Europe or the Empire is even vaguely comparable to the corruption and dishonesty of Hindu journalism is one of the prize pieces of misrepresentation in his book. *His denunciation of Indian journalism goes further, he writes "lying is carried to a fine art, there*

is the lie direct and the lie indirect, the lie of commission and of omission, the lie of suggestion, imputation, and insinuation." And after this scathing indictment tells us that the greatest negative in the press in India is that it has no public opinion except for the Muslims, and the only description to fit the situation is a heterogeneous mass of public opinions. Well if this statement does not come under the well defined types of 'lying' which he so graciously explained for us, there is no other standard to go by. The Muslims belong to various political organisations such as the All India Muslim Majlis, The Muslim League, The Indian National Congress, The Azad Party The Unionists, The Jamiat-Ul-Ulema and the Ahrars. etc. and as such their view-points differ. Where again may we inquire does the solid mass of Muslim opinion come in? He has attempted to substantiate his arguments by advancing the names of several papers with their scope of circulation and policy. This proves nothing except that though they may differ with the methods adopted by each political party to attain their common goal, their main demand and their common object in the political field is complete independence from the British yoke. On this score there is no divergence of opinion. If Beverly Nichols expected complete unanimity by all newspapers, he must have had Utopia in mind rather than India, when writing his *'magnum opus'*; for no country in the world with a host of news-organs could boast of identical outlook and policy in every respect.

If lying is the monopoly of the Indian press, would Beverly Nichols have us believe that war propaganda from the United Kingdom and its allied countries was *truth* without colour, bias or fear. If so, then we must characterise the man who gave us that axiom 'that truth is the first casualty in War' as the greatest liar of all times.

Let him look into his own blue book on Indian Affairs and see if it comes under any section of his definition on 'lies' or are they just a collection of half-truths above classification.

For smugness his reply to some reporters is hard to beat. "You do not want to listen to anything I have to say, if you did listen, you would not understand it, if you should understand it, you would mis-report it. You are here for only two reasons either to make me tell lies or to tell lies yourselves" and then can anyone wonder at the sentiments felt by many but expressed so aptly by Joseph John in Blitz. "The people seem to be getting too clever for their leaders. If so, Democracy had better be left somewhere between the Rhine and the Oder, for those defeated Germans to toy with. By Gad sir, let us have something else. By St. George and the Dragon who will save the British from themselves".

### III

He has the audacity to tell us, that at the time of winning he could go round the corner and purchase enough Anti-British, Anti-American,

Anti-war propaganda to keep Dr. Goebbels supplied for weeks. How many weeks of Dr. Goebbels time, we wonder, would be required to deal with the sympathies of a certain peeress of the British Realm entertained for Hitler and his gang, in spite of a bullet received somewhere in Germany (Hon. Miss Mitford). The pro-Facist tendencies of Moseley and his accomplices, and above all that monumental piece of work by Beverly Nichols himself outlawing war entitled "Cry Havoc".

If as he maintains that every ignoble motive, every type of squalid intrigue is attributed to Churchill and Roosevelt, and the Viceroy is insulted with a bitterness and vulgarity worthy of a Streicher at his worst, then every lampoon, gibe, and insult to India, however much unjustified is worthy of England at her best.

Naturally in a war to the death the scissors have sometimes snapped, but what we would like to know is in this fight to a finish, how the author of "Verdict on India" managed to spend a whole year on the Indian sub-continent away from the war studying its social, religious and political problems, and finding the time to push a pen in an endeavour to augment his own fortunes? What happened to the rigid laws of conscription, and had National service become a 'magna carta' of the past? Was this a practical demonstration of the theme of 'Cry Havoc'? We certainly need his explanations here.

He declares that "this country is stiff with

enemy saboteurs and that throughout the course of this war, the vast bulk of the Hindu press had been singing a hymn of Hate aimed at the British Raj day in and day out in a thousand voices. However loud this hymn of hate had swelled and however false its tones and however harmful were its echoes the British had seldom succumbed to the temptation of suppressing it. The hymn had gone on with the enemy standing at the gates."

They have sung a hymn, A hymn of resentment, not a *hymn of Hate*, because they have been forced to fight to perpetuate their status, namely of the 'under dog', To fight for the ideals of freedom and yet be denied it for themselves. The tones are not false, for falsity can quite easily be a garb that fits the other side to perfection. We cannot be expected to proffer our gratitude to the British for seldom succumbing to the temptation to suppress this hymn of nationalism. They have tried and failed, and Napoleon's dictum still holds good that "the spirit is greater than the sword".

If enemies are at the gate, there are enemies in our midst as well, for those who continue to deny us our birthright or continue to obstruct the country's path to progress cannot be regarded as other than enemies of India. But before giving expression to such sweeping statements of the Hindu obstruction to war, its hatred of Britain and a potential source of saboteurs, Beverly Nichols must bear in mind that if this were so, Hindu India would not have permitted the flower of her youth to shed their precious blood on the

battle fields of France, Italy. The Middle East, Germany, Malaya, Hongkong, Burma, The Arakan and the Assam corner of Japanese invasion. A sacrifice for the survival of the British Empire in this catastrophe. Let him consider the vast army of Hindus who went to make up the fighting regiments of the Sikhs, Gurkhas, Dogras, Punjabis, Rajputs, Gharwalis, Mahrattas, Baluchis, and the thousands from the Hindu states with their own leaders labelled as State Troops, who blazed a trail of glory for Britain, and who subsequently bestowed on many of its sons, the most coveted of awards the Victoria Cross and other awards for gallantry. Let him look into the records of finance and it will reveal that by far the greatest contribution for the successful prosecution of the war was made by Hindus, who donated to various funds, loaned their savings to every Government appeal for money unreservedly-

## CHAPTER VIII.

## Indian Hollywood.

In his chapter entitled Hindu Hollywood the author describes a visit to the film studios, where he witnessed the 'shooting' of a film. There was a love scene in progress, of a village maiden making sheep's eyes at the Hero with a swelling chest. "If ever a girl was saying 'come on' she was supposed to be saying it, with the most evident signs of a chest expanded to bursting point with emotion. The chest swelled, the necks were arched, the fingers entwined and the eyelashes fluttered like the wings of a moth." With this extravagant description of the love scene he goes on to tell us of his subsequent disappointment because the scene fizzled out into nothing. No! not even a clinch or a kiss, because 'kissing' was *taboo* in Indian society and particularly on the Indian screen.

He also regales us with the story of the film "Zarinah" in which the hero dared to press his lips to the heroine's in one scene which created pandemonium in the theatres. Meetings of protests were held all over the country to prevent the degrading influence of western ideas on the film industry,

We have one other observation of his in this chapter, that the reason for this stagnation is because India's Hollywood (which is almost entirely dominated by Hindu capital) is the same as the reason for the stagnation of everything else—religion. Well if religion, or the Hindu religion,

to be precise has this extremely moral and straight-laced effect on the every day activities of the Indian, how can we then accept his condemnation of the Hindu religion by his previous assertions that "The Hindu on the contrary, can believe almost anything he likes, with the result that his religion has become a hotch-potch of the baser passions, sanctified by the Brahmin caste, and personified by crowds of 'Gods' and Goddesses who are as hideous as the instincts which created them." And again that Hinduism had become perverted beyond recognition as it "had accumulated to itself a mass of human superstitions, deifying instinct, sanctifying convenience and giving divine authority to human passion, till it found itself saddled with several thousand Gods some of them of the most disreputable character, Gods of greed and gods of lust."

To lend confirmation to his views on the Hindu religion he has quoted a couple of excerpts from the writings of Abb'e Dubois. "The Hindus originally possessed a conception, imperfect though it was, of the true god, but this knowledge grew more and more dim, until at last it became extinguished in the darkness of error, of ignorance and corruption. Confounding the creator with His creatures, they set up Gods who were merely myths, and monstrosities, and to them they addressed their prayers and directed their worship, both of which were as false as the attributes which they assigned to these divinities. And as a matter of course, the taint of corruption which characterises all the religious institutions



of the Hindus has duly left its mark on their social morality. How indeed, could virtue prevail in a country where all the vices of mankind are justified by those of their gods?" And in connection with the cinema he includes the following quotation "The Abb'e Dubois, writing at the end of the eighteenth century is as up to date as ever, even if we apply his remarks to the movies. What we call love making is utterly unknown among the Hindus, he writes. Although they see no harm in the most outrageous and licentious excesses, there is no country in the world where greater attention is paid to outward propriety. The playful sallies, jokes, and compliments in which our youths are so profuse would be looked upon as insults by any Hindu lady, even the least chaste, that is if they were offered her in public."

What the good Abbe forgot to tell us is how morality in other parts of the world brought into existence divorce courts, which had complete jurisdiction over the eternal triangle adultery, and ordinary tribunals of justice which settled suits of rape, sodomy, fornication and paternity charges, in fact all the minor and major moral ailments with which Christianity is plagued? I suppose we will be reassured on this point that the realisation of outrageous licentiousness was unknown to the West till it studied the Indian problem in the 17th century.

If Abb'e Dubois writings have been on mere hearsay they can be dismissed as an unwarranted exaggeration of a few isolated instances.

have been based on his own personal experiences: we can only surmise that this knowledge was gained off the beaten path. In which case the chapter should have been written in the first person. It is an irrefutable fact that morality in India, on the average boasts of a higher record than other countries, even where Christianity is predominant.

In any case the citing of Abb'ë Dubois in his argument is of no avail at all for the world is only too aware of the Roman Catholic attitude to other religions and what is more, we have greater evidence of their rabid and fanatical outlook even where reform movements in Christianity is concerned.

We have digressed from the original argument, but it was necessary to do so in order to show the difficulty we experience in attempting to reconcile all his previous views of religion and in its influence on morality with his prize observation that "The films are a living mirror of a nation's life, even if one did not understand everything that the mirror showed, it would surely repay a few hours study." In his case it does not seem to have served this purpose even after a *year's* study.

The Indian film may be of interminable length with religion as its main theme, but it only serves to prove the child-like traits of the Indian character, which has not reached the *blas'è* stage of western cinema-goers. The western producer regardless of the plot invariably introduces scantily clad heroines, with full evidence of their feminine charms to delect a large section of his

audience. He has his fingers on the modern pulse in the west, and knows that pictures which include revue numbers, cabaret turns, girls in various stages of dress and undress can command a good box office if the audience can be guaranteed to see as much of feminine flesh as possible, with very little left to the imagination. This unhealthy emphasis on "sex" both through the exhibition of the film and the advertisements, which persist in trying to convince the public that the heroine has "it" and "oomph" is sufficient commentary on what stage civilisation has reached.

The Indian producer knows that the camera which has its lens focused on the remote past with a moral in each plot can command a good market, for it would not be worth his while and finance to produce a plot on everyday life, for the public are only too grimly aware of the many disadvantages of the crisis they are passing through.

He maintains that "if only some courageous producer would make a picture worthy of this subject's tragic possibilities—and damn the box office", a treasure trove is in store for him. What he failed to realise is that in all matters *evolution* cannot be rushed from one stage to another. It has to be gradual, and besides Indian films have only an Indian market in which 'moral' pictures based on the glorious history of the past can be fully appreciated, till the scope of Indian film circulation can reach an international stage. The film companies are not philanthropic institutions to employ a huge staff, undergo the enormous expense of film production just to 'damn' the box office.

The western influence in some Indian films can quite easily be detected by the inclusion of a few cheap American slang expressions in the dialogues and the terms in which the advertisements are couched. It sounds incongruous to have a few western interjections uttered by eastern characters in a wholly eastern setting.

It is not a gloomy picture of the film industry sinking into a slough of despondency. It is an industry making slow progress against severe competition, whilst adapting itself to the needs and changes of the times. It is no more a picture painted by the Indians than by the supposed generous statement of Beverly Nichols, who was quite convinced that we had lost all hope of its advancement. We are alive to its possibilities. In an interview with the press Mr. Sounderajan, a member of the Indian Film delegation returning from a tour of the United Kingdom and the United States, when questioned on the future of the Indian Film industry said "That there were great possibilities for improvement. He hoped that in the immediate future, a number of new theatres would be built and the domestic market considerably enlarged for accomodating the pictures produced in the country. He stressed the need for scientific research in the industry, and averred that engineering skill should be encouraged both in the matter of manufacture of equipment, and of film production. He also appealed for more skilled workers so that there might be a proper division of labour instead of a one-man show."

## CHAPTER IX.

## Art.

Apart from one's interest in politics Beverly Nichols feels that the only possible means of getting to know the people is through the standard of their artistic achievements, as 'art' seems to be the only short-cut to understanding the national psychology. An expression crystallising mass aspirations and emotions. In his quest for art he starts with the city of Bombay. It is indeed strange irony that after approximately a couple of centuries of British rule an Englishman should deliver a "verdict", on the city of Bombay, a gift to British Royalty, 'that it is a city of such unexampled architectural depravity, that even a cursory glance at it is enough to send the sensitive visitor back home on the next boat.'

The reaction of the average Indian to this gem from the oracle is that it is indeed a pity that the worthy author of "Verdict on India" did not return home on the next boat, particularly when he found it fairly easy to obtain passages to and from the United Kingdom, during a war to the death, while other less fortunate Englishmen in this country, deprived of the benefits of home leave etc., struggled to keep the links of the Empire intact.

He avers that in the city of Bombay the cult of hideousness rises to the pitch of fanaticism. A nightmare of evil creatures resembling Neolithic monsters, and that these buildings of the revolting

city, besides being monstrous and mongrel to a point of obscenity can hardly boast of a structure which could be charitably described as third rate, are a disgrace to the British Empire. It puts the British Empire on a level with the Huns. The strangest thing about Bombay according to Beverly Nichols is that apart from himself and Aldous Huxley nobody appeared to mind in the least about that city's architectural vulgarity.

As a piece of windy rhetoric we must admire Beverly Nichols for the forceful way in which he presents his verdicts, which would have assuredly earned him a prominent place among the early Roman orators, but to come down from the realms of fancy and fine flowery speech to hard facts, his criticism falls rather flat. If it is his intention to ridicule German culture we must remind this one-time protagonist of pacifism in whose book "Cry Havoc" he did not mind an Englishman occupying the same position as the Hun. In connection with the architecture of Germany one might be bold as to assert that the prestige of the British Empire and its culture would be enhanced considerably if it possessed such magnificent structures like the Bradenberg Gate, impressive in its Greek style with five colonnaded exits for its streaming traffic; The Victory Column before the Reichstag containing an imposing group of marble statues of the proud Hohenzollern Rulers of Germany; The Royal Palace; The Postdamer station; The Wilhelm-Strasse. The Reich Chancellery and the famous Unter-den-Linden, 198 feet wide avenue. Berlin with its fourteen main rail-

way lines radiating to other cities of the German State; its 63 miles long canal connecting it with the Port of Stetten; its best organised and most efficient elevated and underground railways, and the complex system of omnibuses plying on the broad straight roads. All these gave Berlin the reputation of being the most modern and perfectly organized city, and yet we have Beverly Nichols's smug observation that the city of Bombay places the English on a level with the huns.

His views on the architecture of Bombay are quoted verbatim in the chapter on Indian Journalism, when he addressed an audience in the Taj Mahal Hotel on the buildings of Indian millionaires, which he defined as an affront to God and to man. He had even hinted 'that any self-respecting horse would refuse to pass these places, but would prefer to rush violently into the sea'. His abuse which he claims was stinging and extremely personal and laid on with a trowel, but to all this, his audience had bland smiles and amiable smirks. He appears dismayed at its reception because he expected red faces and angry interjections. One can only marvel at the presumption of such literary adventurers in this country, to satisfy whom India will have to direct her attention to rebuilding her cities *at her own cost* to suit the whims and fancies of these supposed artistic cranks. It is but natural that the audience smiled at the thought of the speaker's presumption in entertaining the ridiculous notion that because *their buildings failed to meet with his august*

approval they had to be destroyed and particularly when such men like Sir Edwin Arnold and the western journalist G. W. Stevens returned to India they would have to be resurrected again. Beverly Nichols has even had the temerity to quote them as declaring that they were all very remarkable structures upon which Sir Edward Arnold looked with admiring eyes and G. W. Stevens thought that Bombay had the richest and stateliest buildings in India, challenging comparison with almost any city in the world and that the "Briton feels that he is a greater man for his first sight of Bombay."

If the efforts of Indian millionaires are directed solely to amassing a fortune with the express purpose of satisfying the whims and artistic fancies of visitors to India when constructing residential structures without the personal angle influencing their plans, then his tirades and subsequent expectations would be justified. But if he was surprised because the Indian millionaires would only smile if they were told to their faces that their palaces should be blown up or turned into Zoos for the more loathsome form of diseased reptiles, then he would have been more correct in his speech if he had said that any self-respecting ass would refuse to pass such verdicts whilst enjoying the hospitality of another country, but would prefer to rush violently back home or into the sea.

As a parting shot we are unable to resist the temptation of adding that if the architecture of Bombay failed to come up to the expectations of



Huxley and Beverly Nichols we can only sympathise with them on the score that they did not see the light of day in 10 Downing street. A simple case of being born in the wrong bed rooms.

## II

Bombay is cited as the first instance as typical of the Indian paucity of talent in the artistic field. We are informed that there is no art in Bombay because there is no reference to it in the closely printed volume of 122 pages of the official guide book. Then I suppose we must also incline ourselves to the hypothesis that the J. J. School of Art which has been the 'alma-mater' of most artists in India and the annual art exhibitions do not exist at all, for with his line of argument it does not make any provision for the error of omission in the composition of the guide book.

However he is helpful enough to suggest that if an inquiry is made of the average Englishman about the city's art, he would direct one with a laugh to the *red light district*. This coarse conception of art of the average Englishman besides-speaking volumes for that branch of art which appeals to the majority of foreigners, makes us wonder if they gleaned their information from the official guide book of the city or did the instincts of Adam lead to their discovery of this art and its primitive expression without the aid of official direction. Or must we deplore the fact that all Englishmen were not inspired by the highest artistic motives as Beverly Nichols?

His studies of the progress made in art by the Indians, impels us, to believe that they can be divided into three classes. The first being the largest were slavish imitators of the 'Ajanta Frescoes' and the other two followed with imitations of continental impressionists. His main complaint against the first class is that they were staring into the past. They were fiercely, nationalistic and despite their shouts of 'forward' were always looking back. It is perfectly true that for these men the glories of the past eclipse the standards of the present. They derive their inspiration from the past, which gave them such monuments of art as the Taj Mahal, The Hindu Temples of South India, The Ajanta Frescoes, The Ellora Caves, The Juma Masjid, The Moghal Forts and the Golden Temple of Amritsar to name only a few, and which filled them with a burning desire to restore the glories of the past and emulate India's artistic achievements.

It would serve no useful point to decry the fact that India is staring fixedly into the past in order to recapture the fading gleams of the glories of yesterday. if we bear in mind the master-pieces of world renowned masters, who achieved an immortal reputation with such paintings as "The Last Supper," "The Angelus" etc. Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Michaelangelo and Millet and a host of continental artists looked into the past and with inspired brushes produced works that cannot be equalled to this day.

What greater inspiration can the modern

Indian artists have, than the Ajanta Frescoes which were started several hundred years before the birth of Christ and reached its culminating point in four to five hundred years after Christ (400-500 A.D.) The richest artistic possession of India and admired by art circles all over the world.

Then we have the Moghal School which aspires to reach the heights attained during the Moghal dynasty occupying a period of over two and a half centuries, from the middle of the fifteenth century to the early eighteenth century and typifying the Muslim culture at its height.

Lastly another great school of art is the Rajput School which derives its inspiration from the Hindu dynasty of North India and Rajputana, dominating the whole of the period from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth century inclusive, giving full expression to Hindu culture.

Compare the trend of *modern art* with its expression of surrealism and its kindred distorted satirical versions, to the influence of art of the past and we have the answer why the great masters draw their inspiration from the culture of yesterday.

### III

Art in the East might appear to be a wan and anaemic abstraction when judged by some western standards, but the paucity of output in painting by a country of over four hundred million, owes itself largely to the lack of stimulus by such insti-

tutions in other countries as the Royal Academy etc. maintained with a view to propagating art for arts sake. Though India has this large population it is divided into two major classes, of a vast proportion belonging to the 'have nots' who can hardly stretch their meagre earnings to purchase life's necessities and an insignificant middle class who could ill afford such luxuries as art purchases. The microscopic proportion of 'haves' the millionaires of India might outnumber the potential patrons of art in other countries, but one must not lose sight of the mentality of these so called "patrons". Without exception it can be said they suffer from the slavish mentality of believing that any thing European if well boosted must be good, regardless of whether they are able to understand that art or not. Very often the message of artist is lost on them, but they prefer to bask in the public estimation that they are *true* patrons of art because they have been able to pay for it. The only short cut to fame as art connoisseurs in this country (however unjustified) is to purchase art treasures in the western market and advertise the fact to the world at large. *There are not many people to pay for the works of Indian artists.*

In his sequel on art called the 'Living and the Dead,' he has invited anyone to name a single major artist who has ever been inspired by wealth or deterred by poverty. The output of the artist has been dependent upon the economic returns, however indirectly and fame directly the world over. They have without a doubt been inspired by dreams of fame through a masterpiece and

wealth to follow in its wake. In India we find that it is a far cry to fame when the value of art depends entirely on western standards.

Yet despite this uphill fight against great odds we have several artists whose fame has attracted western attention. To name only a few we have Jamini Roy, Mukherji, Chughtai, Trivedi, Dass, Choudhri, Parab, Mahadev Satwalekar and Angelo da Fonseca. Not all of these modern artists can be condemned as slavish imitators of Ajanta Frescoes or the Rajput and Moghal Schools. Most of their works are free from communal colour, with a fluency and versatility of style which make them outstanding in the world of art. Some of these artists no doubt owe their finishing touches to continental professors but no one can deny that the originality of these paintings done with a strict regard to atmosphere in their variety and simplicity and purity of tone in their execution, places them in a prominent position among famous artists of the world,

#### IV

It is indeed queer to find that when he says that art of India is dead and has even written his obituary "The living and the Dead" he manages to find some artists whose style he cannot help criticising or appraising. In fact art *must exist* when there are places like the J. J. School of Art, The Mayo School of Art, The Arts College, Osmania University. The college of Fine Arts, Calcutta University, and similar institution's all over

Indian writers is in their versatility and range of creative genius. Both are masters of prose and verse, both are writers of prose fiction, both have written dramatic and lyrical poetry, both are child lovers and have tendered the homage of exquisite song to the sovereignty of childhood. But the students of literature will not fail to observe that the two writers belong to two divergent schools. Tennyson has rightly called Victor Hugo "Stormy Voice of France" The great French poet was "Lord of human tears". The muse of the Indian poet moves in the glory of early dawn and seeks the gathering shadows of evening. She finds her pleasure not in the storm and stress but in the smiling beauties of nature. She listens to the voice of the sandal scented wind from the south and knocks gently at the door of the human heart. The genius of Victor Hugo was not only dramatic, but even melodramatic. He was a master of the big bow-wow style. Rabindranath in his later writings has touched spiritual heights seldom reached by any poet. No estimate of Rabindranath's life and works would be complete without touching upon his philosophy of the Infinite. The poet never loses sight of the Infinite in the finite, the unlimited in the limited. This is interwoven in the warp and woof of his writings,"

If an objection is raised to citing Tagore in this argument on art, we are compelled to draw the readers attention to Nichols book "The Living and the Dead". In his opening chapter he writes "We must begin by defining exactly what we mean by 'art', using the word in its broadest possible

the country. Or would he have us believe that these are the empty tombstones which a presumably prosperous India endows for the sake of urban decoration. If there were no art to speak of but only that, which is better forgotten, how then do we account for such books on Indian paintings by Percy Brown A. R. A. etc.

We have his slighting reference to Shantiniketan founded by Rabindranath Tagore and developed by his brother Abanindra Nath Tagore as an 'art centre'. To use his own words "of course if you are among those who think that Tagore was one of the world's greatest geniuses, to be spoken of in the same breath as Milton or Goethe, you will wish to go to Shantiniketan. If however, you are of my opinion and think that he was merely a charming minor poet, who owed more than he cared to admit to Yeats, you will probably stay away." What he forgot to refresh his memory with is the fact that appreciation of Rabindranath Tagore's works came from the West first, before India gave her illustrious son adequate recognition. Even his own countrymen failed to recognise his genius till he was awarded the Nobel Prize or must we believe that such awards are only given to charming men of minor talents? R. I. Paul gives us a sidelight on the genius of Tagore in his "Tagore's Pamphlets". "an English critic of Tagore has likened him to Victor Hugo. Comparisons between two writers in two different languages are often not helpful for constructive criticism. At times it may have the merit of suggestion. The similarity between the French and

sense, to indicate the creations of the poet, the painter and musician. There have been, of course, a thousand definitions, but behind them all there is a single common denomination, upon which every critic of substance is agreed and that is, that art is primarily a method by which man tries to bring some sort of order into the apparent chaos of the universe, to make a pattern out of the stars that seem to have been scattered so carelessly on the floor of heaven."

## V

If one desired to understand the national psychology, or find mass emotions condensed or crystallised into significant forms - surely one would not seek the paintings of a handful of artists, but in mass expression like the artistic creations of cottage industries or precisely village and provincial handicrafts. The standard of skill achieved in pottery, carpet weaving, leather and textile works and above all, those little devices with which a population seeks to adjust itself to the changing times and the ingenuity displayed in its manufacture.

If art in the abstract is examined as an indication of the cultural state of the populace, a further expression of mass 'art' is in its music and dancing (folk songs and dances). The synthesis of these dances have evolved themselves into three main classes embodying spirit and inspiration which lent perfection to them namely, Kathak,



Kathakali and Manipuri dances which have evoked the admiration of the world.

To rely on paintings only as a medium of enlightenment in one's study of a country, reminds one of the reply of Count Leo Tolstoy to a journalist who pressed him for his views on 'art'. What he actually recognised as art he said, he illustrated in the following story.

"When the Macedonian king Alexander was riding on his beautiful charger through the gates of a conquered city in Asia Minor, his stallion seeing a beautiful life size painting of an Arab mare on the walls started kicking and neighing. "That is art" exclaimed Tolstoy "Even a horse could see it!". What is not understood by the rank and file, but only by a small group who think that they are the elite—is not art at all".

As a crowning piece of western smugness we have the author's very condescending assurance that his criticism on Indian art "was in some small way, to help to offer some sort of advice which might give these young men a creative idea, and set them on a path which might be profitable not only for themselves, but for India." To which new piece of Christian generosity of helping through abuse the barbarian could only gasp "Lead kindly Light".

## CHAPTER X.

## Indian Music.

Indian history and background have exerted a direct influence on the arrangement of sounds identified as *Indian Music* and hence is entirely eastern in expression. A closer study of the origin and development of Indian and European music reveals an identical sound pattern both in melody and harmony in the very early times. The varying degrees of progress achieved by both systems lend confirmation to the fact that the tempo of change has been considerably accelerated in the West, whilst Indian music has been content to lag behind adhering with conservative fanaticism to the religious influence in her musical recitals.

There are two principal schools of Indian music. The North Indian and the South Indian or Karnatic. Under the basic change brought about in the Northern Indian style, about three or four hundred years ago all the white keys in a piano are used in this system as a base commencing with C, recognised as the *Bilawal* scale. The old scale still holds good for the *Karnatic* style with C sharp and D, G sharp and A representing the 2nd and 3rd, 6th and seventh respectively. But the principles of melodic patterning of both styles are more or less identical and capable of interchange.

Just as European music has seen revolution-

ary changes in the 13th to the 15th centuries, so also has Indian music been influenced by the impact of Islamic, Pathan, Persian and Moghal cultures.

To dispel the illusion that improvisation is the whole construction and secret of Indian music we have D. P. Mukerjee's explanation in Indian Music—"Great composers wrote songs and sang them, they composed pieces for instruments and played them; and they were lavishly rewarded. It is not quite right to say that 'composition' is not known in India. A truer statement is that composition and execution were (and still are) combined in the same person. Composition could not in that society be a distinct profession, nor was it written down. Pedagogues being vocal in every branch of Indian learning, scores were not socially necessary. Muslim masters took Hindu pupils and *vice-versa*."

Again: "*Kheyal* (type of song) received its last great impetus from the court of Gwalior, the musical capital of India, where three first class musicians lived about the middle of the XIXth century. Nearly all the best *Kheyal* singers of today are their pupils' pupils. *Kheyal* is less vigorous, less bound by rules, more free than either *Dhrupad* or *Dhamar*, and as such has almost succeeded in ousting *Dhrupad* or *Dhamar*. The utmost cleverness can be displayed in *Kheyal*. Hence the popular view that Indian Music is gymnastic and that it is free to improvise while European music is not; *Kheyal*, however, does not

exhaust Indian vocal music. *Dhrupad* is not gymnastics nor is it all licence in *Kheyal*.

But where European music employs a tempered scale, Indian music relies on the chromatic, and though the instrumental music possesses a variety in harmonic and contrapuntal devices the vocalist depends for his success in a very close imitation of these instruments, which is largely responsible for the nasal and high-pitched effect it presents to the westerner.

Another aspect of Indian music which bewilders the westerner is the effect of monotony on certain notes, as described by Beverly Nichols, who felt that the player was scraping away on 'A.A.A. all the time, till he almost screamed "come off it." But when we consider the basic difference between Eastern and Western music it can be readily understood, for in the latter we have melody produced on a tempered scale with clear distinct intervals between the notes, whilst in the former the chromatic style tends to accentuate the glide, which is all important in Indian music and accounts for the blurr in fast tunes.

Now for a few words on the practical side of Indian music. As in European music there is a similar training in scales; for the English equivalent of Do, ray, me etc. there is the Hindustani one of *Sar, ray, ga, ma, par, dar, may, say*, used forwards and backwards. In a song there is the full use of the overture (alap) time (tal) Rhy-

thm (laya) beats (matra) and parodies as in European music come under the name of *asavaris*.

Vocal music is divided into several classes. *Dhrupad* of Moghal derivation, *Kirtan* mainly in the South, *Tkumri* of Oudh, *Tappa* in the Punjab *Dhama* local provincial style of the United Provincial and *Kheyal* of North India. Of all these styles the last mentioned is less restricted by rules as the others and Beverly Nichols' mistaken idea of improvisation can be quite easily condoned, for even such musical impostors as Nichols & Co. can be misled when their appreciation is confined to Western arts only. D. P. Mukerji gives us an explanation—"It seems that the *Kheyal* singer is always improvising, but on close observation, the apparent license becomes freedom controlled. The same piece may be rendered in different ways by different musicians, as it were by their respective inspiration, but in reality the best execution follows a pattern or two. Only the interpretation of *Kheyal*-compositions is *not* the paraphrasing or the more or less literal rendering of the traditional form to which *Dhrupad* is partial: The original version, as it has come down orally, serves as a blue print of all variations. Words used in *Kheyal* usually portray the emotion of love but in actual practice, they are used as pegs to hang the decorations upon." (Indian Music D. P. Mukherji).

To appreciate Indian music this same writer very aptly describes the contribution of the listener - "But pleasure is an exchange, and the liste-

'Shankar, Menaka and a host of Indian musical and dance societies all over Europe? All those dances were performed to music and if it should satisfy such renowned art and music critics as the Italians and latin races on the continent, surely it should soothe the savage breast of this Fleet Street journalist and evoked his appreciation if not his commendation.

Whilst on this subject of the effects of Indian music on the western ear it might be of interest to note that one famous world authority on music, Leopold Stokowski was considerably impressed by the rhythm which formed the background to every musical design and melody in Indian music. Another fact which did not escape his attention that some types of this music allowed a certain amount of latitude for the exercise of the imagination and creative display of musical improvisation within the pattern or grouping, as quite distinct to the European method of translating strictly from the score. Indian music he felt was entirely entwined with the life, inspirations and spiritual

ner's contribution has always been considered positive. *Sahridayata* sympathy of the listener is the first requisite of enjoyment. The psychology of emotions as evoked by Indian music awaits further research by Indian scholars, who in addition to an equipment in experimental psychology must needs be proficient in Indian aesthetics, meanwhile the fact that listening is an art should be firmly held as a security measure against the maze of technicalities."

"It will have been observed by many that Indian musicians usually shut their eyes and move their hands while singing and playing. Apart from the physical need there is another meaning of such movements and listeners would do well to follow them. The Indian musician, in a sense is a conductor with hands as abaton. The true reason is that Indian music is mainly contemplative even in its execution. So at least two contemplaters, the musician and the listener must meet. The third is the accompanist. Contemplation may be of various types, religious, philosophical and aesthetic. This is an important point about all forms of Indian art", (D. P. Mukerji in *Indian Music*.)

If we are to accept his over-quoted statement of Walter Pater's "That all art tends to the condition of music," and his own reactions generalised in his convictions that Indian music to most Europeans is not only incomprehensible but actively repulsive. How can we reconcile the success which attended such performances of Uday

Shankar, Menaka and a host of Indian musical and dance societies all over Europe? All those dances were performed to music and if it should satisfy such renowned art and music critics as the Italians and latin races on the continent, surely it should soothe the savage breast of this Fleet Street journalist and evoked his appreciation if not his commendation.

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Richard R. Collier writing in the Sunday Standard could not help commenting on the standard of Indian music, he writes:

"So we entered. Lying on a charpoy in the corner of something that looked like a basement kitchen was a cheerful fellow in a bright green loin cloth. He plucked at an instrument which was new and bright and shining, and something like



an enormously complicated guitar. It has 50 strings and yet the principle is the same as a violin, for it is played with a bow which the musician holds at waist level. It is called a *saringhee*. He who plays it of the lazy grin and cheerfully recumbent position is the leader of the small orchestra that accompanies these nautch-walis wherever they may go".

"Play" coaxes Charlie and with a blithe shrug of his whole body as if he doesn't care much either way, he begins, and I listen enthralled. What fools had told me in their blindness that Indian music was for Indian ears alone, and could never be appreciated by the westerner? This was music fit to offer to a King as indeed it must have been many times in the past. It was wild and sad, gay with the bravado of madness, and yet with a lingering note of regret. It was more "gypsy" than all the silk blouse orchestras in the smart hotels rolled into one, It was true Tzigane in an Eastern setting."

One can definitely refute the statement made by the author of 'Verdict on India' that the basis of Indian music is *improvisation*. But if this were so, most of the leading exponents, in fact all, would rely on solo efforts to produce their best, otherwise with improvisation being the inspiration of each player the results would be disastrous on the listener. Something that would fit in with the description of a babel of musical notes devoid of harmony, rhythm, melody, and above all syncopation. It can be asserted as a fact that all

Indian music, whether played at concerts, parties marriage festivals, funerals and religious processions, etc; is frequently played by more than four musicians. Their concerted play possesses a definite plan with a strict regard to tempo, rhythm and melody, thus giving an impression that the tune is being rendered from a score. We feel quite sure that even the Mr. & Mrs. Smiths who attend western classical musical concerts with the main purpose of masquerading as people of 'culture', even when they are unable to identify one piece from another, or distinguish the composers by their works or understand classics in any form, but just attend because it is in the best traditions of the 'elite' will undoubtedly testify that there is a definite tune and rhythm, to any piece of Indian music they have ever listened to.

As a concluding argument to this discovery of 'improvisation' by Nichols, how can one recognise the different compositions of such masters as Tansen, Kalidass, Sadarang, Adharang, Amir Khusro, Abdul Fazal, Rabindranath Tagore, Vishnu Narayan and Bhat Kande etc. when they are being rendered time and again by different executants? And one may enquire of the musical genius Nichols as to how these composers managed to impart the melody and rhythm of each tune in the supposed absence of a score or any written pointer to indicate direction. Let us consider the dances which are taught all over the country under the auspices of such schools as the Hindustani and Delhi Schools of Classical Indian music and Dancing, and performed at every dance festival. Cho-

reographically each dance is executed to the various beats (Tal) of music and which also controls the *mudras* (expressions). The meticulous adherence to the music enables the audience to follow the story that is being unfolded before their eyes through each stage of the dance. All this can be verified by witnessing the ritual dances like the Tibetan Bow Dance, The Dance of Shiva, The Rajput Sword Dance and the Prisoner's dance. Spring dances of Kalidass immortal "Kumar Sambhavam" in Kathak style, The "Bharat Natyam" in Uday Shankar style, and "Kathakali". One can imagine the dancers predicament if the musical accompaniment were rendered through sheer 'improvisation'.

One cannot fail to notice the little tricks utilised by the author in an endeavour to create bias against matters of Indian origin even in music by quoting his version of a conversation with one of the guests in regard to the strings used on an Indian violin "You were wondering about the strings? He spoke very softly, 'Yes, why?'

"He held up his hand four religious tradition.....and his voice sank to a whisper' do not permit us to use catgut".

"So that was it! The same old story, which has had a thousand variations in Indian History, from the grease on the cartridges of the 1857 mutineers to the latest depredations of the sacred cows in the nearest bazar. It all seemed strangely remote from pure music."

The amazing part of this quotation is that if it was told to Beverly Nichols he accepted it as a fact without subjecting the information to any test of reason. One cannot avoid the conclusion that the rational faculties of the author seems to work in spasms. This musical prodigy evidently failed to realise that in India the use of flesh belonging to the cow or the pig is against the religious susceptibilities of the Hindu and the Muslim respectively. Their orthodoxy in this matter does not preclude them from drinking the milk of the cow or using its hyde for various purposes from footwear to other forms of leather equipment. But nowhere does the intestine of a sheep incur religious censure.

If Beverly Nichols treated this piece of information (or misinformation) seriously how then does he explain away the use of hyde for the drums known as Mrudamgams or Tabalas? It might bring about a nervous collapse of the august author, if we were to inform him that the instrument known as the *sarangi* is wired with tendons or catgut and played without frets for accompaniment. Probably by now English literary circles feel that a 'year's intensive study' is hardly sufficient for such musical prodigies, even though they may boast of being able to read musical score, before they could read a newspaper to pose as authorities on Indian music; much less let such instances of the supposed non-use of hydes and cat-gut on the score of religious traditions escape their diligent studies. It is indeed an unpardonable sin for this torch-bearer of imperialism, this

fair-haired child of sturdy John Bull to forget that only the cow and the pig and their *flesh* play a very prominent part in the religious beliefs of the two major Indian communities, particularly when he confessed that he had observed enough to pronounce his 'verdict' on this country.

As a prize tit-bit it is worth quoting this author from his own book "Verdict on India"- "Europeans are by no means the only persons who feel this way. The Emperor Auranzeb once exclaimed from the depths of his soul 'Let Indian music be buried so deep that neither voice or echo shall issue from the grave' "(Foot note on P. 123). Earlier on art he adds another foot note-"Gandhi is probably typical of the modern Hindu's complete insensibility to art; it simply does not enter his scheme of things. He might say about it what G. P. Chesterton once said about music..." "I understand it so little that it does not even annoy me". It would enable the reader to asses the mental vagaries of the author if he were to note well the last piece of this foot note, where even European music fails to please a cultured westerner. There are thousands of musical minded people in the western hemisphere who echo the sentiments of Auranzeb when they listen to Jazz which continues to blare out such tunes like 'Where's that tiger' etc.

We wonder what foot note this worthy author would give to the established fact that even Yeats the celebrated English poet was musically deaf.,

## CHAPTER XI.

**Ayurvedic Mubo Jumbo.**

In India one finds several branches of pharmacology each following its own line of research and experiment. There is the Allopathic side which continues to flourish with great success owing to the rapid strides made in the medical and surgical field and and the stimulus afforded by the contribution of scientists all over the world. The Eastern systems of treatment under such names as Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Naturopathy, and Unani all have their adherents and enjoy a certain amount of popularity because of the measure of success which have attended their practice.

Broadly speaking even with a knowledge of a certain amount of western scientific principles as employed in the treatment of disease can any serious attempt be made to condemn any of the eastern methods of combating disease as futile and abortive. Some very remarkable cases which have failed to respond to Allopathy have found a cure and permanent relief through Homeopathy or Ayurveda.

One is unable to subscribe to his high pronouncement that because Ayurveda and similar treatments being entirely Indian and nurtured by nationalistic fervor, these methods should be the *sole* means of salvation from disease for the Indians, as exemplified by his verdict "One classic example,

of course, was afforded by Gandhi himself. Gandhi had spent a large part of his life inveighing against European doctors, whose hospitals he described as institutions for propagating sin." Yet when he himself developed appendicitis he forgot all about his Aynurvedic counsellors, and was operated on by a British doctor." If this distorted view held good in every country that the discoveries of medical science should be utilised *solely* by the nationals of the country in which these successful experiments were tried and tested, one shudders to think where this monopolistic mania would end in terms of national suicide for those countries which do not possess the means to carry out scientific experiments, and thus have to reply on God and the devil to take care of their maladies, whilst the scientists for the fortunate countries cared for the chosen few. What our learned friend failed to appreciate was the fact that the varying contributions made to the science of western medicine by different countries had materially helped in raising the standard of Allopathy, above its sister methods.

Let us examine this reference to Gandhi and expose the scurrilous attempt to twist facts to suit his own distorted mental view-point. Mahatma Gandhi has no grudge against the English, but against the system and the least of all against any profession such as law, medicine or Engineering. If he maintains that Allopathic institutions are places for propagating sin, we must not lose sight of the fact that present day civilisation has taken an undue advantage of the facilities of modern

surgical and medical treatment to help them to escape the penalties of sin, to wit *abortion* when the parent of the unborn child is other than the husband. Curettage to avoid children born out of wedlock. Hysterectomy, sterilization, prophylactics, pills and other forms of prevention of conception, which enables the unscrupulous to err at will on the wrong side of morality. Let Beverly Nichols bear in mind the wrong use to which the benefits of medicine are put, when certain medical practitioners are prosecuted for performing illegal operations. For every one detected several thousand practice with impunity after ensuring that their activities are free from detection.

It would be ridiculous to maintain that "The mystical bent of the Indian mind—even in science—is so far marked that we should not be justified in accusing its advocates of sharp practice, though some must be aware that its claims are unjustified; and if they or their families are suffering from anything worse than a slight headache they do not hesitate to consult a 'Western' physician. Naturally, they do not advertise these lapses from the true faith, it would not be good for trade", when so many Allopathic doctors in India especially *Europeans* are making tidy fortunes sufficient to retire on, and educate their families on a princely scale. It is fairly evident from the number of European doctors of Allopathic fame *alone*, that they find it an extremely lucrative field for their profession, and that to the natives this form of treatment is no disadvantage in their anxiety for medical cures.



If we are to place any credence on his statement that the Indians refuse to advertise their 'lapses from the true faith' and surreptitiously avail themselves of Allopathy, did he see only Europeans in the hospitals in India? How did he meet the Pathan murderers mentioned earlier in his book? How does he account for the thousands of patients in each city that are cared for by the Government sponsored hospitals? Or have we again to believe that these patients are transformed into Europeans whilst under treatment just to bolster up his abstruse argument?

It is a foolhardy thing even for a journalist to condemn Ayurveda as a blend of astrology, witchcraft and religion backed by 'high salutin claims,' when he himself does not possess the necessary qualifications in pharmacology to enable him to assess the value of a branch of medicine foreign to his education and his surroundings. It is all very well to classify Ayurveda and Homeopathy as equal in status to the primitive practices of the witch doctors of West Africa, because some of the treatments given in Ayurveda are far from effecting a cure. In cases like these one must find fault in the practitioner rather than the science. In all probability the theories of Ayurveda could not be followed faithfully or intelligently by the men who profess to know their vocations. In a similar light if one were to remember a number of instances in which the smaller fry practising Allopathy, have failed miserably to reach the standards expected of them, and hence permitted their patients to die on their hands, and passed a verdict

after reading that very revealing tome on western methods of treatment by A. J. Cronin called the Citadel, Allopathy would emerge in a very poor light, and all the combined efforts of English Journalists would hardly suffice to restore it to its proper place in public estimation.

Let us eschew this brilliant example set by Beverly Nichols typifying racial prejudice and a marked superiority complex of western matters over eastern even in the field of medicine. With a broader outlook which not only appeals to rational minds, we must constrain ourselves to the view that all branches of medicine are complements to each other. A lead given by one is developed by the other thus helping in the general alleviation of suffering to humanity.

As a lay person I put forward an interesting theory I gathered on the subject of the difference in the approach to disease by Allopathy and Homeopathy or Ayurveda. How far these theories hold I am unable to say, but offer it for what it is worth. The difference I was told is that in Allopathy the attention was drawn directly to the disease and the symptoms in an effort to prevent its physical manifestation whilst it subsequently dealt with the cause as well; whereas in Homeopathy the symptoms after diagnosis is ignored completely, because it works on the theory that the elimination of the cause is of more importance than treating the symptoms. In order to permit the symptoms to manifest themselves the efficiency of bodily resistance must be impaired to such an extent that there is no inherent physical counter-

ction to the disease. Therefore it concentrates on building up the bodily energy and resistance to par before it attempts to deal with the *cause* and its attendant symptoms. In order to render the basic difference clearer let me instance the case of an ulcer. In Allopathy the attention would be drawn to curing the ulcer itself, through the application of powder, ointments or antiseptic dressings; while making some half-hearted attempt to remove the cause, which may be attributed to several factors. The Homeopathic method is supposed to work on the theory that for an ulcer to manifest itself on the surface showed clearly that the poison was entrenched in the system. To effect a cure of the ulcer without draining the body of the poison, and removing the cause would only mean bottling up the sepsis or poison which would only break out in some other form of expression. For the ulcer to appear also meant that the physical tone of the system must be impaired considerably. So the first step in this treatment is to build up the resistance of the body to normal again, whilst administering herbal tonics and medicines to help the ulcer to discharge all the deleterious matter, before attention to the ulcer itself is undertaken. To achieve these results they depend entirely on natural methods and rely entirely on a complete accurate history of the patient as far back as he could remember including habits, diet, former diseases and the methods of cure employed etc.

If Beverly Nichols was bona-fide in his intention of studying or investigating the science of Ayurveda he should have gone to the proper train-

ing centres such as Ahmednagar and Gondal to name only a couple of the authoritative institutions, but to dismiss it as 'wholly bogus' and then expect us to reconcile our opinion with his next statement that Ayurveda had actually anticipated western medicine in two cases (The only two cases which came to his conservative mind) (Verdict on India,—“They were the first to use gold in the treatment of consumption, and they were the first to use a certain oil whose name I forget, in the treatment of leprosy. These discoveries were made many centuries ago, and if they had been followed up in the spirit of Western research the world might have been saved much misery.”) is to presume that all his readers will possess the same brilliant genius for criticism with an utter disregard for facts, or must we believe that they are entertained by Nichols in his Utopian dream of medical folly, with dolts as readers of his *august verdicts*?

On studying closely the problems of Ayurveda we discover that to a very large extent the scientific principles embodied in this form of treatment is supported by modern medical research in Western clinics. Contrary to Nichols indictment that Ayurveda ignores the whole field of bacteriology, one is forced to wonder how any system of medicine can afford to ignore the presence of bacteria if it essays to cure disease? If his version is correct that ‘It has no disinfectants adequate to deal with any but the simplest cases of sepsis; to prevent the spread of cholera it hangs a bunch of flowers over the doorway’, how can he

account for the remarkable success which attended the cholera epidemics in the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa when treated by Ayurveda and which overshadowed in results the Calcutta epidemic treated on allopathic lines by the combined efforts of *European* and *Indian* doctors? A disease which we are compelled to regard as other than a *minor* ailment.

It does seem strange to find that a man who boasts of an intensive study of his subject namely India, should fail miserably to ascertain his facts. The hanging of flowers over the doorway is by no means a method of curing cholera, but used by superstitious people who place such store on omens and talismans to help them in their problems. It is used by others with the same purpose as a vase filled with flowers to decorate wards in an allopathic hospital. One might even use such a ridiculous argument as shown by Nichols that even the patients in Europe besides their Allopathic treatment utilise every symbol apart from holy water, pictures, Crucifix, bibles, rosaries etc. of the Catholic church, such as horse-shoes and other similar objects to foster their belief in better luck for the future. There is sufficient evidence available in India as to the quality of the drugs used in Ayurveda and its efficacy as compared with allopathic treatment in some diseases. The comparisons are revealing indeed.

How far one can rely on his verdicts and his knowledge of medicine can be gauged from the following extract in his book.

“ Have you a cure for Diabetes ?”

“ Oh, Yes ”.

“ Does it bear any resemblance to insulin ?”

“ Oh, No ”.

“ Is it as effective as insulin ?”

A pause.

“ Well is it ?”

“ Perhaps not ”.

“ Is it at all effective ?”

“ Well——”.

“I had always understood, we continue that until the invention of insulin, diabetes - particularly in the case of persons under twenty - was incurable and generally fatal. Is not that the case ?”(Von I).

For Beverly Nichols enlightenment we must point out a fact which every lay man knows that diabetes is *invariably* fatal not *generally* fatal *irrespective* of age. Even Allopathy has failed to provide a cure for this malady in the accepted sense of the word. In diabetes the functioning of the pancreas is impaired to such an extent that it completely fails to perform its duty of converting starches and carbohydrates (sugars) into the necessary constituents of the body, and which pass out of the system as sugar in the urine, and even sugar in the blood stream. One of the greatest *discoveries* of the age is ‘insulin’. A product which bears

the closest resemblance in quality to the secretions of the pancreas. This product when injected into the system of the individual supplies the deficiency, but despite its marvellous effects and the adherence to strict diet, the patient eventually dies of the disease and its attendant complications, such as heart, kidney and blood - pressure etc. Insulin can rightly be regarded as a substitute which is sometimes supplemented by another by-product administered orally called "pancreapatin". No cure is even effected and it is one long life of injections and dieting, but to speak of insulin as an *invention* in the same light as a mechanical contrivance of the pre-atomic age is to betray an abysmal ignorance of medicine.

If venereal disease is instanced as a case against Ayurveda, we are compelled to remind this presumed medical authority of the age Beverly Nichols that even in Allopathy there has been no definite cure. Patients have been treated by various methods such as mercury, till the patient suffered from mercurial poisoning. Iodide of potassium, Salvarsan, Neo-salvarsan, to be replaced by Dr. Erlich's famous 606. Each of these were hailed as the wonder cure of the times, but later experience proved that in some cases it just rendered the activity of the *spirochete* into a dormant state to reappear or brought into activity later on. At the moment 'Penicillin' is regarded as the panacea to venereal disease, but time will prove the efficacy of the drug as a complete cure or just a drug which arrests the activity of the *spirochete*.

How far one can rely on his facts is evidenced by his statement on Sarojini Naidu's son whilst visiting their house as a guest "and another son with a black beard who proved to be an Ayurvedic doctor, he lay back in his chair, exploding with general Ayurvedic principles". In case Beverly Nichols is not aware of it, and if it will not prove too much for his nervous system we freely volunteer the information that this doctor whom he mistook for an Ayurvedic quack graduated in medicine in Edinburgh and the leading medical and surgical institutions in Germany. He could verify this from the institutions concerned.

Another false impression which his chapter on medicine conveys is that these eastern methods of treatment are the sole monopoly of Hindus. If this is so, his explanation is called for in the clarification of Unani and the number of Muslim doctors who style themselves as *hakims*?

If we are to accept his high indictment that "In India where the shadow of death lies over so vast an area of the continent". Then the onus of responsibility falls heavily on the shoulders of the English nation; for so long as they continue to present themselves as the self-appointed custodians of the Empire in general and India in particular, in permitting the practice of a branch of medicine characterised by Nichols as 'wholly bogus'; Their sanction to this method of treatment is fully corroborated by the countless number of such institutions all over the country and by



following press notice. "The Ayurvedic Department of the Jodhpur Government runs 60 Ayurvedic aid posts, which are under the charge of qualified and experienced Vaidyas. These aid posts receive subsidies and medicines (not cups of tea; my insertion). As many as 250,670 patients were treated during 1943-44. Special efforts were made to combat Malaria.

"Plans have been drawn up for providing buildings for the aid posts. A sum of Rs. 50,000 has been allotted for this from the Shri Maharaj Kumar Benevolent Fund. Generous offers are also being received from philanthropists and municipal gentry undertaking the construction of suitable buildings for the aid posts."

"Medicines worth Rs. 10,150 were supplied to these posts during the preceeding year. Plans for central Ayurvedic Institute are well in hand. Four scholarships for a period of five years have been granted for Ayurvedic training at different institutions."

If this is cited as an instance of the Indian States we have another press notice concerning British India. "Dr. Abdul Aziz Kazi an experienced homeopath has been put in charge of the Municipal Homeopathic Dispensary of Lawrence Road, where hundreds of patients are taking advantage of his treatment daily."

The shadow of death must be very extensive indeed when 550,000 people die of tuberculosis

annually and about 25,00,000 suffer from this fell disease, and about 5,000,000 suffer from Malaria, and with all these statistics to hand apart from other fatal diseases one really wonders why there should be this air of callousness in the heart of the Empire, namely the Houses of Parliament at London, if Ayurveda "continues to treat the ignorant millions of India with a variety of dopes which are tragically ineffective." (Von. I) Probably reasoning on the same lines as Nichols we might be forgiven in presuming that this huge deathroll aided by inadequate and inefficacious medical facilities lightens the imperial burden of the Britisher considerably.

The only effective contribution to humanity by Ayurveda discovered by Beverly Nichols is its positive contribution to sex stimulus by its different aphrodisiacs. A rational view-point one would imagine would be more in the line of restricting births in a country whose main problem is its ever increasing birthrate, when millions are living on the borderline of starvation, and when particularly we have had that great calamity before us the 'Bengal Famine' in which millions perished for want of food. Mr. Nichols, India can well do without those drugs "which will infuse young men with a horse like vigour."

Those apparently conflicting properties of 'cooling the brain' and 'causing the fountain of desire to spurt, just like the brilliant sun in the serene sky' are merely catch-phrases of salesmanship copying American methods of boosting the

the commodity. Every salesman knows that to use an Americanism, the average Indian falls a 'sucker' for anything that purports to 'cool the brain'. If the aphrodisiacs are as wonderful as Beverly Nichols makes out, we could suggest that they be employed in Europe, where populations have been drastically reduced through the ravages of the war. They could well do with the development of equine propensities to stimulate the birth-rate.

On the subject of cleanliness we have Beverly Nichols following observation "One of the attendants rushes forward, flings himself into the dust, and feverishly pats the sandalled feet of the doctor who was showing us around. A few minutes later this same attendant will be seen mixing medicines in the dispensary. Has he washed in the meantime? A glance at his hands suggested that he has not; However perhaps it is foolish to feel squeamish about it. Is it not written in the books of Ayurveda 'when we think of the medical culture of the Aryan sages, we forget ourselves with joy and feel proud of being born in India, the land purified by their foot dust?'"

Though we forgive Nichols for intentionally taking this literally, and hold no brief for dirt in conjunction with disease, may we ask him how Lawson Tait and Spencer Wells and those before them were so eminently successful in their surgery before Lister attained an immortal reputation with his antiseptic ideas? How does the birth rate in India rise so high and the population in-

'crease in the the absence of sterilized and germ free instruments during the confinement of millions of the poorer classes? How do wounds heal on the millions of dirty and unkempt children when they are infested with flies and dirt? How do millions survive when they do not take the precaution of drinking boiled water or even water that is labelled as fit for human consumption? An answer to this would be very welcome from Beverly Nichols or even Dr. Guthrie who has recently compiled a book on Allopathic medicine, or would we have to rely on the brainiest bacteriologist Sir Almroth Wright?

Postscript: It would be as well to include an advertisement by the Imperial Chemical Industries (a famous Chemical and Industrial firm incorporated in the United Kingdom) on this subject of Ayurveda.....

"The Ayurvedic system of medicine is very ancient. It is most interesting to chemists as its great treatises, Charka and Susruta, the former possibly 2,500 years old, show evidence of considerable early chemical learning. Susruta describes in detail the manufacture of caustic alkali and its use in opening up septic foci and removing diseased tissues. Mild alkali, mainly carbonate of potash, was first made by extracting the ashes of selected trees with water. This was concentrated by boiling and then causticised by the cooking with quicklime made by roasting limestone or shells. The resulting liquor was used for the more drastic treatments. The caustic application was often

neutralised on the body with vegetable acids to finish the treatment and relieve the pain, this relationship of acids to alkalis being well understood. Here we have recorded a chemical operation which regarded a few centuries ago as a modern invention, was being competently carried out by the ancient Hindu for a useful surgical purpose.

"Ayurveda the science of life, is an accumulation of the knowledge of the ages. Its mineral remedies, mainly compounds of the metals with sulphur and mercury, although reminiscent of European alchemy, date much further back and suggest an impressive record of ancient chemical achievement."

## CHAPTER XII.

## The Gaol Bird.

On reading his chapter entitled the 'Gaol bird' we can only wonder at the amazing callousness on his part towards the finer sentiments of life. For a man who dwells at length on the fineries of life and the cultivation of art in particular, to be guilty of a breach of etiquette in advertising to the world at large an account of the hospitality he received at his hostess' residence is an unpardonable social *faux pas*. However one might view it, we fail to see what justification can possibly exist for a man to hold up to ridicule the charity extended toward him as a guest. In all probability his university training and literary learnings helped him to cultivate a form of etiquette, which thank heaven his despised *barbarian* refuses to embrace, or emulate as a social characteristic.

Apart from the reproof that this behaviour merits we find in the same chapter a familiar strain, which the author painfully endeavours to foist on the gullible reader through his own unwarranted interpretation of facts; namely of Indian unfitness for the tasks ahead in general, and Hîndu impotence in particular.

A prize bit of contradiction is in his august verdict "that nothing could be more ludicrous than the spectacle of elderly British liberals gravely applying the principles of western democracy to a country in which democracy has about

as much hope of surviving as a clump of Scottish heather in the Desert of Thar, and yet on page 27 in his book about the Viceregal Estate we remember reading "that India had always been a land of glittering palaces, surrounded by masses of human antheaps. There was never any middle class and no breath of democracy had ever stirred the Indian dust till we came." The "we" referred to I suppose are the hosts of Clives and Beverly Nichols.

It does indeed sound strange that America and other nations see the Indians as a people, but the mote of fine distinctions appears to afflict only the British eye. If American publicists speak with sympathy for Indian aspirations they are characterised as 'bucolic' we would under no circumstances evince surprise if British propagandists state that the reason for the American delusion of seeing the Indians as *one* people is because the pattern of their own population is as mongrel as the Indian sub continent.

What really passes understanding is that both the internal and external affairs of India are directed from England by men who had no opportunity of getting a first hand experience of the country they attempt to rule. But for once we are inclined to agree with Beverly Nichols when in his ramblings on the subject of India, he gives expression to the statement that "any debate on the intricacies of Indian politics by men who have never been east of Suez must inevitably be as futile as would be the debate of the affairs of

the London County Council by men who have never been west of Karachi;" Yet despite this truism the 'old school tie' persists in continuing this anachronism.

## II

In reference to the 1942 struggle we are lulled by his masterpiece of evasion of the issues at stake by declaring, "They (Congress arrests) will be a subject of endless debate and when history gives it's final verdict it will record an emphatic vote in favour of the British Empire." We cannot resist the temptation to add that doubtless it would favour the British Empire if it were chronicled by the proverbial partiality of English historians in a similar vein as the self-advertised victors of both World Wars instead of the modest and more correct claim that Victory was the outcome of a gigantic international effort.

It is all very well to make such sweeping indictments that the arrests were the 'sole means of saving India from being plunged into bloody chaos brought about by the subversive intentions of the Congress; and that the Japanese would have swept through the gates carrying fire and slaughter.' But one must face up to facts. In that historic year when the battle of Burma had begun in right earnest Marshall Chiang-Kai-Shek Generalissimo of China visited India accompanied by his famous wife Madame Chiang-Kai-Shek. After a short stay he delivered the following address; "Since my arrival in this country I have



found to my great satisfaction that there exists among the people of India a unanimous determination to oppose aggression ——— China and India comprise one half of the world's population, our two peoples are peace loving by nature. To-day they have not only identical interests but also the same destiny. For this reason they are in duty bound to side with anti aggression countries and fight shoulder to shoulder in order to secure the real peace of the whole world ——— The present struggle is one between Freedom and Slavery, between Light and Darkness, between Good and Evil, between Resistance and Aggression" *Let us also remember that he met all the leading Congress bigwigs including Gandhi*

Later we had Sir Stafford Cripps mission with his historic offer and as all offers go it was the same old parcel with new labels on. In short the proposals were as follows

(1) India was to have complete Dominion status with the right of secession

(2) Every province of British India including the States to exercise the rights of self-determination

(3) Adequate provision to enable the formation of one or more Indian Unions

(4) Details of the constitution making bodies for the proposed Indian Unions were as follows for the duration of the war.

(a) Defence portfolio to be administered by Great Britain through the Commander-in-Chief.

(b) Complete Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council, with of course the exception of the Defence portfolio.

As a constructive proposal it fails to survive even the barest scrutiny; The inherent defects are :—

(1) That its acceptance paved the way for the ultimate destruction of the unity or integrity of the country, because it permitted the formation of any number of Unions. A division of this nature would inevitably weaken the country's fighting force. It is for this reason that the Canadians refused to allow the formation of separate political Units for the English and French speaking sections; it is the same case with South Africa, where the Dutch and English stock are welded into one. Then there is the example set by the United States in which it took a Civil War to ensure unity. The effects of this division can be seen from the lack of unity between Ulster and the rest of Ireland.

(2) The proposals encouraged the rank and insular outlook of communalism.

(3) The right of self-determination to the provinces with the same right extended

to non-acceding parts meant another pitfall to those who strove for the integrity of the country.

Above all the definite statement from Cripps that the defence of India will not be in Indian hands even if all parties desired it, was the last stroke of Imperial justice or magnanimity to a country which evoked even from Gandhi that famous remark that it was only a "post dated cheque." It promised nothing concrete and hence was turned down by almost every party of significance in India.

The proposals were withdrawn shortly after Burma fell. In the tense and apprehensive atmosphere the Congress had their meetings at Bombay on August 7th; at which a disillusioned Gandhi evolved the "Quit India" movement. The All India Congress Committee admitted the movement and sanctioned Civil disobedience on a mass scale under the leadership of Gandhi. But by 4-30 a. m. the following morning, all the Congress leaders; members of the Working and ordinary committees were clapped into goal.

Anyone fairly conversant with the "modus operandi" of Congress resolutions always find it difficult to reconcile it with their idea of a serious move and even find it more difficult to understand Gandhi's or other Congress Leaders' insistence on intimating the Viceroy of their intention; and the time and date of its execution. It was more like a warning note from Raffles to his intended

victim. A sort of gentleman's agreement to lay all their cards on the table face upwards, and a move which invariably ended up behind the bars before they even had the power to move. If sabotage was the sole inspiration of their subversive intentions one wonders why they bothered to intimate the Viceroy or broadcast their intentions to the world at large. This procedure, senseless as it might seem, was activated by a desire to achieve a settlement by amicable means eschewing force or unpleasantness in any form, and was one way of attempting to convince a Conservative and hard-headed bureaucracy that the situation thrust upon India was completely unacceptable to her.

In connection with the political arrests; we include here a press notice "Big drop in figure of imprisoned Congress men. According to figures available here 6,127 people were undergoing imprisonment on September 1945; in connection with the Congress Movement. This figure compares with 22,000 who were in prison in the middle of 1943." (Statesman)

Surely Beverley Nichols would not have us believe that, but for these 22,000 or 25,000 interned the internal security of India was jeopardised? We wonder what his reactions would be to the excerpts from the Viceroy's speech on V. E. Day. "It falls to me to speak to you tonight in the absence of Lord Wavell. I wish he could have been here on this memorable night. In the darkest days of the War, his victories achieved largely with Indian troops in the face of larger

forces and without material equipment that we now have in abundance, were almost the only consolation we had. We should not forget those days. There were many then in India and prominent among them were the princes, who showed their stoutness of heart and refused to contemplate the possibility of defeat, and just outside India our trusty ally Nepal who never faltered. Those were testing days and it was not only the troops in the field who were tested."

"Then I think of another great figure our Commander-in-Chief General Auchinleck and of the gallant stand he made at El-Alamein which closed the gates to India. From those early days the power of India and the fame of her fighting forces have steadily grown and increased." From this we can assess Beverly Nichols' description of 'fiery speeches' of the Congress, and the thunder in the air. After the arrest of the leaders the rank and file of the Congress repudiated non-violence as a method for compelling the British to accede to their just demands to rule over their own lands and put their own houses in order; and a period of lawlessness broke out. A short-lived affair since leaderless their energies were frittered away in unorganised abortive efforts. A glorious resolution by a disciplined body degenerated into the struggle of the rabble who were only able to use stones and bamboo sticks. As in the past, history repeated itself once more and after a week or fortnight's expression to their feelings, they were unpleasantly brought face to face with superior force.

Then in February 1943 Gandhi began another dramatic fast. A number of acid things have been said about these fasts but to interpret them as blackmail is a viewpoint that is indefensible. It might incur the contempt of the Britisher for this form of political *masochism*, but there is another side to it, as Sir S. Radhakrishnan explains "Gandhi admits that submission to injustice is worse than suffering it. He tells us that we can resist even through an act of non-violence, which is an active force." It just boils down to a philosophy of sacrificing one's life to an ideal, of preferring death to an existence of slavery. If blackmail is Gandhi's strongest suit, then under what category does the Government injunction come "of do as we want you to, or else"

We have Beverly Nichol's propagandist view of the treatment of political detenus. He cites his unfortunate hostess Sarojini Naidu as an instance "She was very frank. She did not attempt to conceal her hatred of British Imperialism. If she had any complaints of the prison regime, not only as applied to herself, but to others less fortunately situated she would certainly have proclaimed them, but she did not"

"Charges of actual brutality needless to say one would not expect. Even the most hysterical opponent of British rule has not yet seriously charged us with emulating the methods of Nazi Concentration Camps. But one might well have expected to be told of discourtesy, of the irritation of petty officialdom, of inadequate diet and of a

mpts at mental intimidation. The fact that Mrs. Naidu made no such charges justifies us in assuming that there was never any occasion to make them"

It has always been a point of British policy to keep the leaders of any party antagonistic to their rule, in a state of comfort and luxury if occasion arose to incarcerate them. Such places as the Aga Khan's Palace and other noted places are used for obvious reasons, one of which is that the public is lulled into the delusion that all members of the offending party are well cared for and secondly if harm befell the leaders the whole country might rise in indignation. So to cite a member who has partaken of the lavish hospitality of prison life under British supervision is worse than useless and proves no point at all. In this connection we have Sarojini Naidu's declaration as quoted by Beverley Nichols "and really—in the same breath, we were quite comfortable. The rooms were pleasant and the food was good and the British were most polite. But—and here a dangerous gleam came into her eyes—what they did not seem to realise was that we would far rather have starved in a rubbish heap in freedom than have been kept inside in luxury. We were utterly isolated, but *utterly*. Not a fly came in from outside; we saw nobody, but the doctor, and he always looked at us in a sort of terror as though he thought we were going to be tactless enough to die or fade away or do something generally embarrassing, and for three weeks we had not a scrap of news. All the papers were banned and there was no radio; even our families had no idea where we'd been taken. We were guarded like precious jewels in a

casket." Had he troubled to record the feelings or treatment of other detenus (of the other 20,000) he might have had other pious and smug remarks to set down. It is the treatment of these unfortunates which made Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru declare at Allahabad on September 29th 1945; "Pandit Jawaharlal in a statement to the press says, 'On my return to my province I must take the first opportunity to express my horror and disgust at a recent occurrence at Benares, news of which reached me in Bombay. It was reported that three under-trial political prisoners in a Benares gaol were to be taken for trial to a court, which was situated a mile away. They were in fetters and had handcuffs on, and yet they were asked to walk this distance.'"

"They said that it was not possible for them to walk with fetters on, and that they should be taken in a conveyance. This was refused and they were knocked down and dragged by the legs and arms all the way to the court, just as a dead animal might be dragged. Their clothes were torn, their skins scraped off and they arrived at their destination with their backs and buttocks torn and bleeding. On the way a request for water was met with insults."

"I find it difficult to believe that such sadistic horrors can be perpetrated even by those who by long practice in them have ceased to function as normal human beings."

A report from London, December 7th 1945, states that in the House of Commons an unexpected



debate led to Major W. B. Wyatt (Labour) who had served in India seeking an assurance from Mr. Arthur Henderson Under-Secretary-for-India about the situation in India. To quote "Already in India things had been said which indicated that many Indian leaders felt this Labour Government was not different from the Conservative Government."

"There were still detained in India several thousand political detenus. It was time there was a clear decisive statement about what was to be done with them."

*"Release or Trial urged,"* He said that they should either be released or tried, because it was against the traditions of this country to detain people indefinitely in prison without a trial."

"He appreciated that many of the detenus could be classified by the authorities as terrorists, If the authorities had reasonable grounds to suppose that some of them were terrorists, they should either try them now or announce a date after the elections if they thought it too dangerous to let them out now, so that they might be tried."

To deal with Nichols reference to the emulation of Nazi methods in Concentration Camps, let us suggest that the inmates were the victims of no trials; the irritations of officialdom petty or otherwise; attempts at mental intimidation; physical brutality; A lack or complete absence of courtesy and above all a criminal inadequacy of diet. The

comparison is well worth noting.

His footnote on page 154 "The number of occasions when physical violence has been cited against the British, even in times of riot and civil commotion is astonishingly small. Apart from one or two unhappy episodes, of which Amritsar is the most notorious, the charges boil down to a few bruised heads and broken limbs. And even these, it must be remembered were usually caused by *Indian* policemen defending themselves against greatly superior odds" gives us a further insight into the ingenious workings of the British mind. Scores of riots have taken place all over India owing to the British policy of labelling each community separately in politics and economics and giving them an inequitable distribution of power in the functioning of their duties, and riots caused by acerbated feelings on minor scores. Often these insurrections have been met by force applied through Indian policemen and troops, and in retaliation the rioters have been compelled to use bottles, and bamboo sticks. As soon as this exchange takes place greater force is brought to bear on them by the use of guns and British troops. The reason why the world hears so little of these episodes is because a score or so of dead matters little in a country that is second only to China in population. One can weigh the measure of veracity supporting his statement when we bear in mind how even people in this country were

ndists and the censorship department it is not surprising that the charges boil down to bruised heads and broken limbs. Let us also remember that the *Amritsar* incident was far from *unhappy*, the word used by Beverley Nichols should have been *tragic*, and that *Indian Troops* were used even when there was a complete absence of brickbats and stones etc. and the plea of self-defence.

Several reasons are put forward by Beverley Nichols for the overflowing prisons, one of which is that "the prisoners themselves *force* themselves behind the bars because it was chic and smart; Because the stigma of prison was synonymous with the *cachet* of the scars of the Heidelberg student. Secondly that a spell of prison life is the best financial investment and that for the politicians and journalists it was almost essential. That even for the smaller fry it was time well spent as there were thousands of employers waiting with open arms for safe young men." Nothing can beat this smug assertion for if as Beverley Nichols declares "that it was not a question of how to bring them in, but how to keep them out." Probably he will enlighten us as to why the authorities took those 22,000 or 25,000 Congress detenus in, when their main problem was how to keep them out? Nobody likes prison life no matter how drear their existence might be outside the prison walls, for unrestricted freedom is a compensation for all the handicaps put together. If a spell of prison life is really an excellent financial investment for the politician, journalist and the average citizen, let him consider how his hero Mr. Jinnah and other

politicians of the same calibre as Dr Ambedkar, Savarkar etc. enjoy such political prominence and popularity without seeing the inside of a prison or acquiring the "scars of the Heidelberg student?" Let him recollect the number of prominent people who are the leading figures in the government, social and political ranks through hitching their ambitions to the Government chariot. Let him read the thousands of names, which adorn each "Birthday's" and "New Year's" Day lists which bear token to the services rendered to the Crown by people who care more for personal advancement and monetary gain and inspired less by patriotism. And above all let him compute the millions of Rupees paid out in pensions to the hundreds of thousands of little props which hold up the caissons of the British Raj, and then let him give us his answer if a spell of prison life is the best start in life?

There are thousands of employers waiting with open arms for safe young men. But it is chiefly because it is the only way that they can show their appreciation for the young men's sacrifices. To twist Churchill's famous phrase that *'never before have so many (Indians) owed so much to so few'* would be very apt when applied to the Indian situation.

When British critics point accusing fingers at the overflowing prisons of India and are compelled to draw invidious comparisons between their avowed principles and its actual practice, they are not ignoring any of these factors which

Nichols puts forward, but are fully alive to facts. We in India can only raise our hearts up to heaven in appreciation that there is still a particle of feeling and sympathy for the under-dog in some British hearts and that sanity is still in existence in some parts of the Empire in which the colour bar, the Pegging Act, and the refusal of immigration to the white man's domain are a few of the famous expressions of the boundless energy of John Bull.

If Nichols has British prestige at heart because the so called voluntary detenus forced themselves into prison particularly when the authorities are suffering from the sheer physical difficulty of finding accomodation, then the indictment of *Masochism* belongs rightly to the British character for by adding the detenus to the already full complement of the gaols they appeared to thrive on their self-inflicted sufferings which Mr Nichols is attempting to use as a veil of martyrdom for the long suffering British. A task worthy of the foreign office rather than of Fleet Street.

The comic element is supplied by the last part of his chapter to wit "there is something profoundly disquieting to the Western observer in this mass *masochism*. It may be suggested that the Indians have no alternative. Even if we grant this suggestion (which I do Not) such conduct is unthinkable in the youth of any other country. It is neither virile nor creative. But it is profoundly Hindu. It is an aspect of a spirit which is to be observed in many walks of Hindu life." Apart from reminding him of the facts achieved by the

Indian Army as a whole, the commentary on mass *masochism* of the non-virile and non-creative variety is shown up by an announcement during the War by the British authorities "Indian Army Heroes." "In this war no fewer than 2,532 decorations for bravery and devotion to duty have been awarded to officers and men of the Indian army up to the end of 1944, several thousands have been mentioned in dispatches and given gallantry certificates. The valour of the Indian fighting forces in all theatres of the War has been the pride of the United Nations and the despair of the enemy. These fighting men have won for India a place of honour among the nations."

India at that time stood second in the number of Victoria Crosses. The U.K, being first and all the other nations of the Commonwealth lagging far behind India. "142 Distinguished Service orders, 291 Indian Orders of Merit, 954 Indian Distinguished Service Medals, 546 Military Medals." yet among the combined awards to the British forces we failed to come across the name of Beverley Nichols. Have we made a mistake and looked in the wrong column, instead of the propagandists section? The Indian awards were shared largely by all the major communities including Nichols despised Hindu who received the lion's share. Would he have had these men devote their lives and energy towards wielding the *mighty* pen for glory and monetary considerations through penning a welter of *verdicts* or fighting for the cherished ideals of Democracy and the survival of the British Empire on the battlefields of the world?

The suggestion that the Indian detenus had no alternative is quite true for here we see an unequal struggle of stones and sticks versus armed force. Force in it's true colours exemplifying the iron hand in the velvet glove which brooks no interference with it's plans. As a last effort to deal a crushing blow to the victims of political struggle he writes "The other important factor which is ignored by our critics is the large proportion of prisoners who came from classes so impoverished that prison life by comparison with their own was a luxury. They had no political affiliations. Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru these were names that meant nothing to them. All they knew was that they were hungry and homeless. Normally they would have avoided prison like the plague, it had an evil name and after they came out of it they would have been even more despised and rejected than before. But now for reasons which they did not pretend to understand, prison had suddenly become respectable, their elders and their betters were clamouring to get inside, and inside as they all knew was good food, clean beds and no cares for tomorrow."

"To the agrument of their empty stomachs is added the glory of martyrdom the result was inevitable. They threw their stones flashed their knives and swarmed through the gates. Their faces wreathed in smiles" It all sounds wonderful, but he has closed his eyes to the repeated agitation in certain quarters for the improvement in the gaols of India, as regards food and treatment. Let him spend a week or so in prison and we will see how he describes his so-called good food, and clean

beds apart from the back breaking routine of gaol life. If as he says that men or masses of them despite the ignominy of going to gaol seek admission to fill their hungry stomachs, it is indeed a poor commentary on one hundred and sixty or seventy years of British rule that some of it's subjects are compelled to barter their freedom, to keep the flame of their miserable existence alive. .

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## CHAPTER XIII.

## Heil, Hindu.

It has invariably been the practice of many writers to attack public figures of importance by presenting pictures of misrepresentation calculated with a view to writing something new and different from the popular version and so increase the selling value of their master-pieces and indirectly augment their royalties. In this sense Beverley Nichols has run true to form and as is the *'modus operandi'* of such literary knights he has undertaken to deliver his accusations on a man who has been rendered incapable of defending himself. A truly classic example of British sportsmanship as exhibited by this English journalist.

If Gandhi is regarded as the living symbol of India by many people it is because he reflects the will of 400,000,000 people to be free. One fifth of the human race attempting to shake off the foreign yoke and shape their own destiny, but to aver that it is blatantly untrue because "Gandhi is violently repudiated by the overwhelming majority of 100,000,000 Muslims who rightly regard him as their most dangerous enemy," that "Gandhi is no more India to them than Laval is French to the Free French," is to reduce one's study of this problem to a farce. The analogy drawn shows how low the author is prepared to stoop in his attack on Gandhi. Unfortunately for Beverley Nichols over 45 years of service to his country's

cause has provided Mahatma Gandhi with a smashing reply to his many critics.

Of course Beverley Nichols' continues "you do not hear much about these Muslims they have little cash to spare for propaganda, nor have they Gandhi's genius for publicity." Well put, but what need have they for cash when they have their step-father John Bull with his vast resources and his eminent spokesman Beverley Nichols to rely on. For this demand of the Muslim League (mark you) and not Muslim India has provided the British with one of the strongest excuses to apply the thin edge of the wedge against their Congress opponents. In support of this we quote a review of "British propaganda in America" by Chaman Lal in the Sunday Standard by M.G. "The author in a nutshell alleges that no country has been more vilified and misrepresented, defamed is the word he uses— in the United States than has India especially during the recent war and declares that crores of rupees have been spent and 10,000 British propagandists employed for this purpose, in addition to some Indian stooges the object being to prejudice America against India and her struggle for freedom.' The author disagrees with the dictum of some that the British are good propagandists. He thinks that the opposite is really the case and says that in proportion to the number of books, pamphlets and propaganda papers distributed or subsidised by the British Government, the results have been very small. Americans, according to Mr. Chaman Lal were not very seriously taken in. Nevertheless there was

one period in which British propaganda, according to the author, scored a great success. This was in 1942 when Gandhi and the Congress were discredited as being Japanese and swallowed this wholesale, according to him. But this too, later fell flat, when people like Mr. William Phillips and Generalissimo Chiang-Kai-Shek went on record that the Congress was more anti-Fascist than any Allied government."

"Mr. Chamanlal also bases some of his statement on documents which, he says he managed to smuggle from America to India. How he did this he will not of course reveal."

It is this activity of British propagandists in America, which made the Congress decide to represent their case. A press report from Allahabad December 8th 1945 "The vast propaganda that is being carried on abroad by interested parties against the Indian Freedom movement and especially against the Indian National Congress is soon likely to be counteracted to some degree at least.

"I reliably learn that the Foreign Department of the A.I.C.C. is now busy making arrangements for resuming publication of its *News letters*. The 'Letter' will give a short resume of the various activities, policy and programme of the Congress. It will be published every fortnight and will be sent to England, America and other foreign countries. It is mainly intended for the enlightenment of the people of foreign lands who have some very queer and misconceived ideas about India and the Indian

problem. The 'Letter' was first published in 1940 but with the starting of the individual civil-disobedience movement it's publication was suspended in October 1940."

"The foreign Department of the A.I.C.C. is now in charge of a former deputy Collector Mr: Amir Raza who was so moved by the events of the August movement that he threw up his job and jumped into the movement."

The Muslim Leagues' claims and demands are given full prominence and with Beverley Nichols as their publicity agent they can well rest assured, for he has seen to it that their cause is well represented all over the English speaking world through the medium of that famous American magazine *Reader's Digest*.

Millions were aghast at the technique applied by Germany of dividing the front against them and conquering each one in turn, but what they forgot was that it was a very old game played by the Romans under the heading of *divide et impera*, and handed down to be perfected and used by the British to achieve and maintain her imperialistic policy and power, with Germany as it's latest exponents.

Communal-minded Muslims will of course regard him (Gandhi) as their deadliest enemy for as Prof. T. K. Dutt puts it in the *Loin Cloth Laid bare*. "Though it has not been my privilege to come in direct touch with the great soul yet I would

say like those blind millions who have said and are saying still that Mahatma Gandhi is not a human being but a god, nor would I ungraciously hint like many of the mean and malicious souls that he is a friend only of the Hindus, or of the Moslems, or of the Britishers. If Mahatma Gandhi is a friend to any he is a friend only to the true Indian and a sworn enemy to those who want to divide India into races or communities sects or parties, dominions or principalities. If he has any fault he has all the faults of his countrymen and if he has any virtues he has all the virtues of the greatest men of the world. Those who judge him by his words are fools and those who misjudge him by his actions are no better. I have undertaken to lay bare the loin cloth not only with my pen but also with the pen of others, with view to reveal to my countrymen that Mahatma Gandhi is neither a devil nor a god but only a human soul. He is not even a superman or a monster as some critics have painted him. The loin cloth is but his badge; the badge of Indian poverty Indian suffering, Indian bondage but not the badge of Indian divinity or Indian spiritualism. If we are to do justice to the man and his noble cause we must lay bare the badge."

Even Glorney Bolton who endeavoured to ridicule Gandhi by caricaturing him in his book "The Tragedy of Gandhi" could not help recording that "Time will enable us to see the triumphs and blunders of Gandhi in a gentler light. He has harboured no enmity against us. Posterity will certainly number him among the friends of Eng-

land. One day we shall raise a statue to his memory as we have raised a statue to the memory of Washington and Lincoln, and to the memory of others whose universal spirit transcended the conditions of their time."

Though Mr. Winston Churchill made that famous remark that he would be the last minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire and naturally regarded him (Gandhi) as an irreconcilable foe of the English there are other English people like Ellen Wilkinson who chose to look upon him as the "best policeman of the English and the British Empire."

Before proceeding with his attack on Gandhi he warns us that during the whole of his stay Gandhi was in gaol and hence he was unable to meet him in flesh. "The phrase 'gaol' is somewhat misleading because gaol was one of the Agha Khan's palaces and he could have walked out of it any moment he chose by signing a half sheet of note paper. He would not have been betraying himself or anybody else, nor would he have been influencing in the smallest degree either for better or for worse the cause of India's independence. He would simply have been signing a guarantee not to sabotage the war effort, not to lay the country open to the Japanese? not to stab the British and American armies in the back. That was all he was asked to do and he would not do it."

place a political prisoner does not possess nor exercise the privilege of choosing the place and time of his incarceration or have a hand in the appointments to suit his whims and fancies, and the fact that the Aga Khan's palace was used for this purpose does not redound to the credit of British prestige. In any case a severe restriction on one's actions in a palatial building has precisely the same effect as enforced detention in a mean hut. A gilded cage does not in any way colour favourably the outlook of the canary. It might sound well to say that by signing a half-sheet of note paper he could have walked out at any moment he chose. If his signature involved only his own personal liberty without prejudicing any national issues at stake or his personal honour the indictment would be well merited. But in view of the Congress stand taken in the matter; of its registered protest of disapproval at India being dragged into the war by Great Britain without its true representatives being consulted in the matter; its resolution of 'Quit India' which demanded the withdrawal of British rule implying that if the British failed to concede to this primary demand the Congress would launch mass civil-disobedience. The stand-point of the Congress on this score was that withdrawal of the British rule was necessitated by the fact, of it being absolutely essential for the success of Allied Arms in general and the subsequent safety of India from Japanese aggression. A situation in which the Indians themselves were the sole judges. To the question of arrangements for the duration of the war, if the fundamental principle of India's right to indepe-

ndence was recognised by the United Nations, the resolution of the Working Committee envisaged a clear procedure that there was no reason to suggest that there was no room for negotiations.

As for laying his country open to the Japanese we have Gandhi's warning to the Japanese on July 18th ("Indian struggle 1942") "To every Japanese "I must confess at the out-set that though I have no ill will against you, I intensely dislike your attack upon China. From your lofty height you have descended to imperial ambition. You will fail to realise that ambition and may become the authors of the dismemberment of Asia. Thus unwittingly preventing world federation and brotherhood without which there can be no hope for humanity. I grieve deeply as I contemplate what appears to me to be your merciless devastation of that great and ancient land."

"It was a worthy ambition of yours to take equal rank with the great powers of the world. Your aggression against China and your alliance with the Axis powers was surely an unwarranted excess of that ambition,"

"I should have thought that you would be proud of that great and ancient people, whose old classical literature you have adopted as your own, are your neighbours. Your understanding of one another's history, tradition, literature should bind you as friends rather than make you the enemies you are today."



"If I were a freeman; and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am I, would not mind risking my health, may be my life, to come to your country to plead with you to desist from the wrong that you are doing to China and the world and therefore to yourself."

"But I enjoy no such freedom, and we are in a unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than your's, or Nazism. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to correct them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly but friendly quarrel with foreign rulers."

"But in this they need no aid from foreign powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britian's difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the war broke out nearly three years ago."

"Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the independence of India, a recognition of that independence by Britian should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China";

"I would ask you to make no mistake about

the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of militarisation of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition; Personally I fear that without declaring the independence of India the Allied powers will not be able to beat Axis ambition which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled war-fare. If they copy it their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to naught. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognising *now* the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into freed India's voluntary co-operation etc:.....

That he was fully alive to the world situation we have our reply to a question (Indian Struggle 1942 Prof: Darbara Singh) "If the Japanese really mean what they say and are willing to help to free India from the British yoke, why should we not willingly accept their help. It is folly to suppose that aggressors can ever be benefactors. The Japanese may free India from the British yoke, but only to put in their own instead. I have

always maintained that we should not seek any other power's help to free India from the British yoke. That would not be a non-violent approach; We should have to pay a heavy price if we ever consented to take foreign aid as against the British; By our non-violent-action we were within an ace of reaching our goal. I cling to my faith in non-violence. I have no enmity against the Japanese but I cannot contemplate with equanimity their designs upon India. Why do they not realise that we as free men have no quarrel with them? Let them leave India alone, and if they are well intentioned what has China done to deserve the devastation they have wrought there?"

Then on May 3rd : to a question "are you not inviting the Japanese to attack India by asking the British rulers to withdraw?" he gave the following reply "I am not. I feel convinced that the British presence is the incentive for the Japanese attack. If the British wisely decided to withdraw and leave India to manage her own affairs in the best way she could, the Japanese would be bound to reconsider their plans. The very novelty of the British stroke will confound the Japanese, dissolve the subdued hatred against the British and the atmosphere will be set up for the ending of an unnatural state of things that has dominated and choked Indian life. As far as I can see the Japanese seem to have made their plans independently of Indian opinion., They are not to be affected by any writing of mine But they will be confounded by the action I have advised the British to take."

Then on May 17th he wrote in the issue of

the Harijan under the heading "To every Briton"

"I ask every Briton to support me in my appeal to the British at this very hour to retire from every Asiatic and African possession and at least from India. That step is essential for the safety of the world and for the destruction of Nazism and Fascism. In this I include Japan's 'ism' also. It is a good copy of the two. Acceptance of my appeal will confound all military plans of all the Axis powers and even of the military advisers of Great Britain."

"If my appeal goes home I am sure the cost of the British interests in India and Africa would be nothing compared to the present ever-growing cost of the war to Britain, India and the World."

"Though I ask for their withdrawal from Asia and Africa let me confine myself for the moment to India. British statesmen talk glibly of India's participation in the War. Now India was never formally consulted on the declaration of War. Why should it be? India does not belong to the Indians. It belongs to the British. It has even been called a British possession. The British do with it as they like. They make me an 'all-war resister' pay a war tax in a variety of ways. Thus I pay two pice as war tax on every letter I post, one pice on every postcard and two annas on every wire I send. This is the lightest side of this dismal picture. But it shows British ingenuity. If I was a student of economics I could produce startling figures as to what India has been made

to pay towards the war, apart from voluntary contributions. No contribution made to a conqueror can be truly described as voluntary. What a conqueror the Briton makes! She is well saddled in her seat, I do not exaggerate when I say that a whisper of his wish is promptly answered in India. Britain may therefore be said to be at perpetual war with India, which she holds by right of conquest and through an army of occupation. How does India profit by this participation in a British War? The bravery of Indian soldiers profits India nothing."

Before the Japanese menace overtakes India, India's homesteads are being occupied by British troops - Indian and non-Indian. The dwellers are summarily ejected and are expected to shift for themselves. They are paid a paltry vacating expense which carries them nowhere. They have to build their cottages and search for their livelihood. These people do not vacate out of a spirit of patriotism. When this incident was referred to, me a few days ago I wrote in the columns that the dispersed people should be asked to bear their own lot with resignation. But my co-workers protested and invited me to go to the evacuees and console them myself, or send someone to perform the impossible task. They were right. These poor people should never have been treated as they were. They should have been lodged suitably at the same time they were asked to vacate."

"People in East Bengal may almost be

regarded as amphibious. They live partly on the land and partly on the waters of the rivers. They have light canoes which enable them to go from place to place. For fear of Japanese using the canoes the people have been called upon to surrender them. For a Bengali to part with his canoe is almost like parting with his life. To those who take away his canoe he regards as his enemy.

"Great Britain has to win the war, need she do so at India's expense? should she do so?

"But I have something more to add to this sad chapter. The falsity which envelopes Indian life is suffocating. Almost every Indian you meet is discontented. But he will not own it publicly. The Government employees high and low are no exception. I am not giving hearsay evidence. Many British officials know this' but they have evolved the art of taking work from such elements. The all-pervading distrust and falsity make life worthless unless one resists it with one's whole soul."

"You may refuse to believe all I say, of course I shall be contradicted, I shall survive the contradictions."

"I have stated what I believe to be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

"My people may or may not approve of this loud thinking. I have consulted nobody. This appeal has been written during my silence day. I am

just now concerned with Britain's action. When slavery was abolished in America many slaves protested, some even wept. But protests notwithstanding slavery was abolished in the land. But the abolition was the result of a bloody war between the South and the North, and so though the negro's lot is considerably better than before, he still remains the 'outcaste' of high Society. I am asking for something much higher and for a new era, even though there may be protests and wailings from some of us."

The dictum that only the strong can bandy such sayings as 'those who are not with us are against us' still holds good in the world of power politics to day and this accounts for the hostile reception that the Congress activities received at the hands of the Press in America and Great Britain. Later we had Mr; William Phillips President Roosevelt's Personal Envoy and Marshall Chiang-Kai-Shek to support the fact that India and the Congress were against Fascism.

To a question that his intended policy seemed very pro-Japanese he wrote "I could only laugh at the suggestion, I am sincere in my passion for freedom I could not conciously or un-conciously take a step which would involve India in a position of merely changing masters. If in spite of my resistance to the Japanese menace with my whole soul the mishap occurs of which I have never denied the possibility, then the blame would rest wholly on British shoulders. I have no shadow of doubt about it. I have made no suggestion which

even from a military standpoint is sought with the slightest danger to the British power or to the Chinese. It is obvious that India is not allowed to pull her weight in favour of China. If British power is withdrawn from India in an orderly manner, Britain will be relieved of the burden of keeping the peace in India and at the same time gain in a free India an ally, not in the cause of the Empire because she would have renounced in toto all her imperial designs but in a defence not pretended; but wholly real of human freedom. That I assert and that only is the burden of my recent writings and I shall continue to do, so long as I am allowed by the British power."

If his signature would not have jeopardised India's cause for independence we have only Beverley Nichols assurance, but in the light of past history of a record of promises and the repeated failures on the part of the rulers to implement them can one blame the Congress for refusing to accept a "post-dated cheque?" Gandhi's refusal to sign is well justified in the light of his previous experiences in the hope of independence as a reward for co-operation. Prof. T. K. Dutt sums it up very well in his book *"The loincloth laid bare"* "He has been variously branded as a Muslim-Gandhi, a British Gandhi and a Hindu-Gandhi. Mark how he talks with the greatest zeal as the staunchest champion of British citizenship and the British Empire. 'Our existence in South Africa is only in our capacity as British subjects. In every memorial we have presented we have asserted our rights as such.



We have been proud of our British citizenship or have given our rulers and the world to believe we are proud. Our rulers profess to safeguard our rights because we are British subjects and what little rights we still retain, we retain because we are British subjects. It would be unbecoming to our dignity as a nation to look on with folded hands, at a time when ruin stared the British in the face as well as ourselves, simply because they ill-treat us here. And such criminal inaction could only aggravate our difficulties. If we desire to win freedom and achieve our welfare as members of the British Empire, here is a golden opportunity for us to do so by helping the British in the war, by all means at our disposal. It must largely be conceded that justice is on the side of the Boers, but so long as the subjects own allegiance to a State it is their clear duty generally to accommodate themselves, and to accord their support to acts of the state".

"These words clearly show that the apostle of non-co-operation in India was the great apostle of co-operation in South Africa. He was not a co-operator in mere words, but in deeds also. He organised a volunteer corps of non-combatants for the stretcher work, and it was accepted by the Government. Gandhi the future archpriest of pacifism became the Serjeant Major of the Indian Ambulance corps. General Buller mentioned Gandhi and his co-workers in dispatches and when the war was over, he and thirty six other Indians received war medals."

*"There again on the eve of the Great War,*

Gandhi declared most religiously. "It is my knowledge-right or wrong of the British Constitution which binds me to the Empire. Tear that constitution to shreds and my loyalty also will be torn to shreds. Keep that constitution intact and you will hold me bound—a slave to that constitution" In the same strain he talked at the commencement of the Boer War. "We were slaves and they were masters. How could a slave co-operate with the master in the hour of the latter's need? was it not the duty of the slave seeking to be free to make the master's need his opportunity? This argument failed to appeal to me then. I knew the difference of the status between an Englishman and an Indian, but I did not believe that we had been quite reduced to slavery. I felt then that it was more the fault of individual British officials than of the British system and that we could convert them by love."

"If we would improve our status through the help and co-operation of the British it was our duty to win their help by standing by them in their hour of need. The opposing friends felt that this was the hour for making a bold declaration of the Indian demands and for improving the Indian status. I thought that England's need should not be turned into our opportunity, and that it was more becoming and far sighted not to press our demands while the war lasted."

How much India is justified in taking up her present standpoint or the position of 1942 is evidenced by Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit's discus-

sion at Indiannapolis Oct: 26th 1945 "A nation is entitled to its independence and the only right that Britain has to be in India is the right of conquest, declared Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit in a discussion here on 'Why India wants her independence?'"

"India must be freed immediately if the world is to have peace. India constitutes one fifth of the human race and her cultural traditions go back 5,000 years" she said.

"The war just ended was supposed to have been fought for the freedom and happiness of the human race, yet the moment the war ends we see a spectacle of this same freedom being denied to the peoples of Asia."

"The imperialistic system by which western colonial possessions in Asia are ruled is the twin brother of Fascism, and as long as it is allowed to flourish it will continue to breed the worst traits of Fascism. We see today tragic happenings in Java and the French colonial possessions, where the British, with the help of American Lend-Lease materials and Indian troops are suppressing independence movements in these areas" (Reuter).

In a speech in Cleveland Ohio, March 10th Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit told a council of World Affairs audience last night. "The question of India sums up the whole moral issue of the

war; whether the Democracies fighting for the professed purpose of enabling all people's freedom can continue to condone the suppression of India's millions."

The problem of India is not one for cold storage to be thawed out after the war and after peace terms are settled. Now is the time for India to line up with the progressive forces of the World, for until the East can join up in it's own right there can be no sound permanent peace. But those people who wanted Democracy in India are now in prison. A hundred thousand have been sent to prison without a trial."

"Saying that she believed that a gradual transference of power from Britain to Indian leadership would lead to world recognition of India as an independent nation." She added "some say it would lead to Civil War. The people who suggest a revolution forget that we are an unarmed nation."

"Mrs. Pandit emphasised that she was not demanding the British to get out overnight, but Britain should make a sincere gesture now, of her intentions towards ultimate self-rule. It could be done by releasing political prisoners, restoring provincial assemblies, and replacing reactionary imperialistic officials with liberal administrators." (Associated Press India)

Compare the situation as described with the text of the joint declaration of the Atlantic Charter signed August 14th 1941 (Indian struggle 1942

Prof. Darbara Singh M.Sc P 239.)

"The President of the United States and Prime Minister Mr. Churchill representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries, on which they base their hopes for a better future of the world."

"First, their countries seek no aggrandisement territorial or other. Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned.

"Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live, and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

"Fourth, they will endeavour with due respect for their existing obligations, to further enjoyment by all States great or small, victor or vanquished of access on equal terms, to trade and to the raw materials of the world, which are needed for their economic prosperity."

"Fifth, they desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field, with the object of securing for all improved standards, economic advancement and social security."

"Sixth after the final destruction of Nazi

tyranny they hope to establish a peace which will afford all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and this will afford assurance that all men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from want and fear."

"Seventh, such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance."

"Eight, they believe, all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons must control the abandonment of the use of force. Since no further peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will likewise aid and encourage all other practical measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments."

It is incredible that two such gentlemen should meet on the high seas and make this momentous pronouncement, after appointing themselves the custodians of world peace; yet when one of these signatories President Roosevelt in a very Christian spirit "Commenting on Mr. Wendell Willkie's speech referred to above, said",

"The Atlantic Charter applies to all humanity";

But Mr. Churchill the British Prime Minister "The other Christian signatory, on November 10th made a historic utterance on the existence of the British Empire which includes India as well after the war. He said in the course of his speech at the Mansion house luncheon addressed to the Lord Mayor's annual Banquet "Let me however make it clear we mean to hold on to our own. I have not become the King's first Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire. I am proud to be a member of the vast Commonwealth and society of nations gathered around the ancient British monarch. Without which good cause might well have perished."

We have often heard it said that Britain's wars have been won on the playing fields of Eton; now we know that the future of it's Dominions is decided at the banquet tables. Probably there should be a complete change of diet before practice and profession of political ideologies can run parallel to each other.

On the question of the much advertised August disturbances we quote from a letter to the Statesman by Hussain "As against Subas Chandra Bose, 'H' should remember those 25 brave Indians who have been awarded the Victoria Cross in this war. It should not also be forgotten that India raised an army of nearly 3,000,000; mobilised her industries to such an extent that President Truman truly remarked that 'India had become an arsenal of Democracy.'"

"Lord Wavell expressed the opinion that without Indian divisions the Middle East could not have been held in England's dire peril. Recently General Eisenhower observed that in the Italian campaign alone the Indians have written a great page in military history. But for the August disturbances which every Indian feels could have been avoided with vision and statesmanship on both sides, India's contribution would have been still greater. India produced only one great Quisling (Subas Chandra Bose") What of France where the number was legion, yet France remains a great power."

Though it is the custom of most critics to soften their remarks on Gandhi with all manner of qualifications because they fail to understand him Beverley Nichols declares that he does not choose to follow the same example. He says "I have no incense to spare for Mr. Gandhi except the small pinch which one grudgingly tosses at the ugly feet of any other Dictator as a reluctant tribute to his theatrical qualities. For the rest apart from the fact that in Britain's most dangerous hour, he chose to stab us in the back in a manner strongly resembling Mussolini's thrust at France He seems to me a typical Hindu politician of quite inordinate vanity, narrow, ignorant, and supremely intolerant."

It does indeed sound strange, even incongruous to hear from Beverley Nichols that he has only a small pinch of incense to throw at the ugly feet of any Dictator when we read his "News of England" "Men do not Weep" etc. Writings which extol Fascism or symptoms of Fascism, when they are in



evidence in his own country. *Or if it suits his literary convenience.* On perusing all his works where at one moment he admires the strong hand, in the next he lauds pacifism which seems to be the gist of "Cry Havoc." These moody expressions reveal a calculating mind to the astute reader, who is unable to free himself from the conclusion that Nichols is an author who pens his works with no personal conviction behind them and permits the mood of the times, in other words the public pulse to be the inspiration which guides his essays in the literary world, employing a style reminiscent of the present popular fashion of 'running with the hare and hunting with the hounds;'

He would probably have us believe that this disciple of Ruskin and Tolstoy (i.e. Gandhi) stands in much the same light as Benito Mussolini. On the one hand we have the sabre rattling Caesar who had his legions of Fascist Blackshirts to march either into Abyssinia or France, and on the other hand the feeble half-clothed politician contemptuously referred to as the 'naked fakir,' who has dedicated his life to the emancipation and freedom of his country, whilst sacrificing all the comforts of modern civilisation. In the former case we have a man who believed in *force* and had the means to execute his threats with an armed following, and in the latter case a man who persuaded his unarmed following, the Congress Party, to accept his interpretation that the attainment of Swaraj (independence) could only be achieved through peaceful and legitimate means. A philosophy of non-violence, eschewing violence in any form which he

insists on each member of the party professing and believing, in every aspect of his fight for his country. Wherein is the resemblance Mr. Nichols between a man with a fully equipped modern army goose-stepping to his dictatorial will, and a man supported by a party in a country almost unarmed as only a dependent nation could be, and attempting to live up to Christ's exhortation "Love thy enemies" and "of turning the other cheek" ?

If Gandhi seemed typical, of the Hindu politician to Judge Nichols, as a man of inordinate vanity, narrow, and supremely ignorant' one can only express regret at the fact that even the finishing touches of an English University, and some considerable time spent at the famous Temple-Inn failed to measure up to the standards of culture as set by a journalist-cum-author. One would imagine on reading his sweeping indictment that the above named qualities are the sole monopoly of the Hindu community only. If one permitted Beverley Nichols to have his way he would in all probability divide the whole world into three main religious groups. All those guilty of the qualities of which he does not approve, and as enumerated above would be classified as *Hindus*. Those professing the opposite characteristics would come under the heading of *Muslims* irrespective of their geographical distribution and last of all we would have the Nichols type of *Christian* who will sit in judgement on the other two.

We have read the works of many writers who have attempted to discredit Gandhi but so far

all except Beverley Nichols, seemed to accept his reputation for honesty of purpose, and strict regard for veracity. This happens to be the first occasion that a writer has deliberately ventured to impugn his character where truth is concerned. To support his indictment he cites Katherine Mayo who was supposed to have received a letter from Gandhi attacking her work on India styled 'Mother India'. Gandhi repudiated being the author of the statements as quoted by Miss Mayo, and which letter was reproduced photographically in Harry H. Fields book "After Mother India." To render his attack above suspicion he invites us to see a fuller account of it in "After Mother India" (Harry H. Fields Jonathan Cape). The case would pass muster, if only we availed ourselves of his invitation and left it at that. But it falls to pieces when one reads both the books in question "Mother India" and "After Mother India", and also Gandhi's articles in *Young India* at the time in connection with the subject of Miss Mayo's book. A diligent study at once gives the lie to Nichols accusation that Mahatma Gandhi is guilty of an untruth. The salient points of the case stick out a mile. Miss Mayo in her book acknowledges her indebtedness to Harry H. Field for his help in compiling her book. Her reactions to Gandhi's characterisation of her book as a "Drain Inspector's Report" and its reproduction in Harry H. Field book speaks volumes for the strength of its authority. Something similar to the saying 'ask my brother'. After drawing this inevitable conclusion it is not surprising that on

reading the duplicate copy of the letter in 'Young India' we discover that the sense of the two copies do not tally. A discovery which exposes the error of tearing certain portions out of a message till its true reference to the context is lost, and thereby rendering it capable of suiting one's convenience. Incidentally far from characterising Miss Mayo's book as a *complete* tissue of falsehoods, Gandhi commended the reading of the book so that we might profit through the observations of an outsider, on certain aspects of life which deserved condemnation, and for which the Indians could not evade responsibility. For an astute observer that he (Nichols) claims to be, and to permit such an obvious conclusion to escape his diligent study, is surely very remiss in a critic of any standing, if he desires his readers to accept his work seriously. We begin to wonder if Gandhi's reiteration of the word *truth* still sounds like the squawk of a parrot to his (Nichols) gullible ears, and whether the world was bluffed into crowning Gandhi with a tinsel of divine radiance, or was Nichols himself *had* on the occasion?

To deal with Nichol's version of Gandhi's challenge to history, we have his quotation of the ovation given to the Prince of Wales during his visit to India (drawn of course from Mother India and the Times of India) and of which Gandhi professed to be in total ignorance. "The police were almost helpless, they could not keep back the crowds which surged forward to get a closer glimpse of the Prince. Traffic regulations went to the winds. The crowds surrounded his car and cheered——such cheering.

as has never been heard in Bombay before. Even the wearers of Gandhi caps took them off, and waved them wildly in the air. The rich man in his motor car the poor man in his rags. Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis, Europeans, all joined in this final demonstration of loyalty and affection. So large were the crowds that it took the Prince's motor car ten minutes to cover a hundred yards.

Let us first remember that the political parties in India number a very insignificant proportion against India's huge population and at the time of the occurrence it was practically microscopic. Ova-tions and welcomes were much in evidence in spite of the boycott movement initiated by the Congress, and shared by members of some of the largest communities. It was a boycott against the Imperial system and carried out by men with very pro-nationalistic motives. The enthusiasm displayed by those who, did not take part in the movement and referred to in 'Verdict on India' does not go to prove that the movement was a failure, for as a protest it registered itself to official notice to the extent, that wherever the Prince of Wales went precautions were taken by the authorities. The riots and subsequent deaths which were duly reported in *all* newspapers apart from the Times of India lent confirmation to the tempo of feeling that was running high at the time, and the press acknowledgment that all was not well in the country. One significant factor contributed to the display of enthusiasm by the crowds in all big cities of India and that factor was the outstanding personality of the Royal visitor. One might go on record by stating that he was held in

esteem in practically every country of the world owing to his personal charm, and to the type of sportsman and gentleman his person stood for. His reputation for being the champion of the 'Under-dog.' It was to these qualities that the crowd assembled to pay homage, regardless of what opinion they held for the constitution of the British Empire.

It would be as well to remind Nichols to make sure of his facts, before indulging in such high sounding phrases as "The Drain Inspector's Report, to repeat, is a museum piece for all students of the Gandhi mind. It is a masterpiece of evasion, duplicity, and false implication."

## II,

Finally we come down to brass tacks, the cloak is off and we see revealed the figure which Nichols wants us to witness, namely the All India Congress as it appeared to him and as he would have us believe. He writes "However it is not with Gandhi the man, that we are here concerned but Gandhi the dictator, and the Fascist organisation which he has created called Congress which obeys the slightest crack of his whip."

"One of the strangest paradoxes of modern history is that Congress should be the darling of warm-hearted Western liberals who would faint with horror if it were suggested that they were themselves tainted with Fascism. For Congress is the only 100 percent full blooded uncompromising example of undiluted Fascism in the modern

world."

He maintains this standpoint by declaring that it is Fascist *in principle*, because it insists on the Brahmins unrelenting claim to dominance and the necessity of maintaining the 'laws of caste', and similar in respect to the Nazi claim of superiority of the Aryan race or Nordic type.

Secondly that it is Fascist *in practice* because it enjoys the dictatorship of Gandhi, who has time and again imposed his will on the Congress party, as for instance to negative the British attempt to introduce responsible self-government of 1935, making his influence felt in the Provincial Government, as did Mussolini through his Italian corporations, and finally the refusal of office at the outbreak of this war.

Thirdly that it is Fascist *by confession* because a book written by Hira Lal Seth entitled the 'Iron Dictator' compares favourably with Nichols' version of "Mein Kampf" as applied to the Indian problem.

It sounds quixotic to think that the Congress founded by an Englishman should have functioned as a political party for the last sixty years under the watchful eye of the British Government; and only in the year of grace 1944 A. D., Mr. Beverley Nichols makes the profound discovery that it is 'the only 100 per cent full-blooded uncompromising example of undiluted Fascism in the modern world.' If this is to be treated seri-

ously we cannot help but draw the following conclusions.

(1) What has happened to British political acumen for it to fail to discover the proper identity of the Congress?

(2) Had it gone under a very lengthy anaesthetic or into a state of protracted trance as advocated by the learned author of "Verdict on India" in order to understand Gandhi and his ideas?

(3) If all Nichols says is correct it were high time that the type of individual chosen for the Indian Civil Service, and the method of testing its candidates be completely revolutionised with a recommendation that authors and Journalists should form the nucleus of the 'steel frame' instead of highly educated 'varsity men who are evidently guilty of performing their duties in a state of somnolence.

(4) That if the British Government were engaged in a life and death struggle with Fascism would it not have been more effective to deal with the 100 percent undiluted type (and unarmed at that) at home before dealing with their lesser foes abroad. Or must we take this as yet another example of Britain's foremost propensity for muddling through, or that even the Houses of Parliament are staffed by men who are unable to distinguish their real foes even over such a period as three score years, and are content to fritter



away the lives and resources of the Empire in dealing with the minor scourges of this civilisation?

(5) Again if his conclusions are justifiable would it not be more to the point if all those in charge of the administration of the Empire commit *hara-kiri* or tie themselves in sacks and drown themselves in the Thames, for allowing an author to steal a march over them in exposing the Fascist brood of vipers in the commonwealth's nest?

To deal with his first accusation that the Congress is a Fascist organisation on the score of the Brahmin claim to superiority, we must study the history of early society in order to appreciate the Brahmin's claim to superiority, which today is contested on every side except in the religious field by the Hindu community. Even amongst some sections of their own fold this is rarely accepted and as to their status with other communities it is definitely of no consequence. With the Aryan infiltration of India a new religion was introduced amongst the natives till it spread to the ends of this subcontinent. The inception or, to be precise the point to which this religious belief can be definitely traced is that period in which Manu the Law-giver organised and entrusted the propagation of this faith to the hands of his high priests or Brahmins. These Brahmins continued to fulfil the function of administering to the state, as well as holding themselves responsible for the spiritual enlightenment of their following. It is therefore not unusual to find that the Brah-

mins arrogated to themselves the idea of superiority as compared with the mentality and functions of their followers. Besides the cultural superiority of the Brahmin the construction of the Hindu social system was such that the position of the Brahmin both spiritually and materially was unassailed. A striking similarity of this state of affairs in which the clergy dominated both the social and political and administrative fields of civilisation can be seen in the early history of the west, and it was not without a struggle that the secular authorities relinquished their material power to the state. With the march of progress the aspect of the problem underwent a considerable change till today we see a standard of education and enlightenment shared by members of all communities and castes challenging successfully the one time monopoly of the "priestly (Brahmin) class" whose chief function as a caste in the Hindu fold is to officiate in the religious field *only*. In the administration of priestly offices they are held in veneration by the other castes and subcastes of the Hindu social system and *Not* by members of other Communities. The Congress organisation has a membership comprising sections from all the Indian communities and hence the Brahmins' religious position is reduced to the same common denominator of all members. Further if it lays strict emphasis on the caste system and its continuation, how does Nichols explain away the Congress history of its efforts to emancipate the Untouchables, initiating Temple entry bills, fraternisation with its attendant laxity of rules in the

maintenance of the watertight caste divisions? If this form of reasoning is applied to the classes as obtaining in England and the difficulty with which the upper classes are trying to stem the tide of fortune which threatens their privileges we would be just as much within our rights in condemning the social structure of English classes as Fascist *in principle*.

How Nichols could possibly explain his assertion to the satisfaction of the reader that the "Congress which is predominantly Brahmin (who claim the status of Gods on earth) obeys the slightest crack of Gandhi's whip?" Gandhi comes from the *banya* class much lower on the social scale and looked down upon by the Brahmin. Then again we have yet another Nichols' paradox mentioned by him before, "that there are thousands of little Gandhis in the bazaar" and it is hardly conceivable that Mahatma Gandhi would struggle for several decades for the enslavement and subsequent exploitation of his own caste. As a case to support his indictment it falls rather flat.

If we examine the next reason we are forced to a similar conclusion. The accusation of Fascism cannot be levelled at the Congress, because they frustrated the British attempt at provincial autonomy and because the Gandhian influence could easily be *discerned* in it's activities. In the first place the people in India particularly responsible quarters know just what reforms to effect in order to improve the administration and it is therefore no cause for surprise to see them *vetoing*

ordinances which are not acceptable to them. A free hand to manage their own affairs is the best answer to the problem. And for a president's influence to be felt is only natural, for after all it is the head of a party, who sees to the successful execution of the party programme. A similar indictment could be levelled against any party in the British Government especially Churchill whose strong personality dominated every aspect of life during the Second World War.

If we accept this third factor of it being Fascist by *open confession* on the strength of quotations from an irresponsible book called the "Iron Dictator" by Hira Lal Seth, we must before bringing our attack to bear on this last piece of valediction prepare the background with an explanation. The subject of this book deals with the life of Vallabbhai Patel and *not* Mahatma Gandhi and the text of the writing was a case against the British Government describing how Vallabbhai Patel resisted its interference through using his strong influence to ensure party discipline. This piece of work is by an author who is not one of the leading political authors of the day, nor is it from the authoritative pen of any accredited Congressman of the calibre of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, or from the official historian of the Congress Dr: Pattabhai Sitaramya. The references which Nichols used in "Verdict on India" have been utilised to impart a different significance to that intended by Hira-Lal Seth, and which can be seen to its proper advantage when the book is taken as a whole. These contrasts of personalities or we should say efforts

to draw some similarity between leaders of political opinion with those who held the world's stage as Hitler and Mussolini, were the theme and fashion of most writers and we may condone these authors for attempting to convey the strength of personality or character of their heroes.

Now if he accepted the author of the 'Iron Dictator' as an authority and places his full reliance literally on his writings, it is but justifiable to presume that the same authority attends other passages in the book which must be accepted with due seriousness, otherwise the veracity of the author is assailed, or Beverley Nichols lack of moral scruples in choosing only such bits as would aid him in supporting his false accusations is fully exposed. Hence his explanation to the following extracts will be very welcome.

( The Iron Dictator Hira Lal Seth )

"The year 1919 opened with a massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. This spilling of innocent blood immediately after the holocaust of 1914-18 showed that man had not learned any lesson from that grim tragedy, and that there were still people who could be capable of suppressing the rights of other nations and other races. Versailles and Amritsar stand out as the blackest spots of three centuries of British domination over the major part of the globe. It was not mere coincidence that these two most ghastly tragedies of all times occurred in the same year. It showed that British Imperialism had become so bloodthirsty after

victory over Germany with American money and Indian manpower that it was not satisfied with imposing its will on a helpless nation, but also wanted to rule with brute force over its former comrade in arms. In a word the Amritsar tragedy was as crude an exhibition of racial superiority as Versailles was of national pride. The latter was one of the causes of this war. The former alienated India from Britain, and was the immediate cause of launching of Gandhi's Non-co-operation movement 1920-21."

Again "The Government had previously enhanced assessment in Kaira District in 1918. And the result was the struggle which forced it to retrace its steps. Now it was again repeating the same game at Bardoli. These are the tactics that Hitler has successfully followed against Jews in Germany. Whenever public opinion in foreign countries including England has protested against such measures Hitler has relaxed them for a while, only to introduce them again with increased vigour. British Imperialism which is older than that of Hitler's imperialism has used all those weapons in India, South Africa, Egypt and Palestine before Hitler used them. But whereas the Jews, taxed and expropriated could leave Germany because their rich brethren in other countries could help them and Zionists could provide shelter for them in Palestine, Madagascar, Mexico etc: the peasants of Bardoli poor uneducated people could not leave their beloved cattle and migrate elsewhere." Again "Sardar Patel, himself referred to these executions in his Presidential address and said that although he did not agree with the methods of

S. Bhagat Singh he had great praise for his courage and sacrifice. The heartless and foreign nature of the Government was never more strikingly demonstrated than in their carrying out the executions in the teeth of the all but universal demand for the commutation of the death sentence. Let us not however be deterred from our purpose in a fit of resentment. This insolent exhibition of their armed power but adds to the heavy indictment against the soulless system and increases our capacity for vindicating our position, if we refuse to be deflected from the straight and narrow path we have chosen. May the souls of the brave patriots rest in peace and may their families find comfort in the fact that the nation is the sharer of their mourning."

It is indeed strange that only Nichols and a few calculating politicians seem to discover the principle of Fascism in the Congress constitution, when other and more responsible statesmen as well as individuals of the same standing as John Gunther failed to discern any similarity between the Congress leaders and the Fascist heroes of Europe. To prove his case he cites the instance of men who do not concur with the Congress policy and makes use of the word "eliminate" as used by the author, who in his misguided effort to convince us of the disciplinary actions of the Congress party uses the unfortunate Fascist illustration. To quote "Nariman not only disagreed with Patel, but like the storm-troopers Ernst and Roehm he had personal differences with the Dictator. The storm-

troop leaders were shot by Hitler. Nariman was not shot but merely eliminated."

'Eliminate' is a convenient word but the emphasis here lies on the method of elimination instead of the more bloody system of firearms. The dissenting leaders who fail to see the method of the Congress programme are no assets in the party, especially when their whole-hearted collaboration is not forthcoming. In similar cases all over the world, the man who sees no identity of interests or procedure with the main body invariably resigns. It is the same with the Congress and by 'elimination' the author only desires to show that as men capable of taking a leading part and whose policy or outlook is not acceptable to the rest of the party they are not allowed to direct the party programme unless they adjust their outlook. The fact that they are alive and not in a concentration camp proves the difference between the favourite or typical Nazi method and that obtaining in the Congress fold. Even in the English political field we see men who were once household names condemned to a state of political obscurity because their contribution to the party *caucus* adversely affected the interests of the party as a whole. Characteristic of Gandhi's attitude towards dissentients is the following press extract. the Hindu Feb: 11th 46 (Ahmedabad Feb: 4th "I would be less than loyal to the Congress organisation if I did not warn them, The people of Tamil-nad) against losing the valuable services which no one can shoulder as Rajaji can at



the present moment, writes Mahatma Gandhi in a signed article in today's *Harijan* which resumed publication today."

"After refuting the suggestion that those who wanted to approach him during his recent tour of S. India were prevented from doing so Mr: Gandhi says that Mr: Rajagopalachari was one of his oldest friends and was known to be the best exponent in word and deed of all he (Mahatma Gandhi) stood for."

"Mahatma Gandhi continues "That in 1942 he differed from me I know, all honour for the boldness with which he publicly avowed the difference. He is a great social reformer never afraid to act according to his belief. His political wisdom and integrity are beyond question. I was therefore pained to find a clique against him. It is a clique that evidently counts in the official Congress in Madras. But the masses are devoted to Rajaji. I am neither vain nor foolish enough to feel that I could have had the huge public demonstrations all along the route of the pilgrimage if he had no influence with the masses of the Tamil-nad. Congressmen in the south will act as they think best, but I would be less than loyal to the organisation if I did not warn them against losing the valuable services which no one can shoulder as Rajaji can at the present moment." (A.P.I)

Again Nichols disproves his own theories on Nazism in not only the same chapter but

the same paragraph. He writes "It would be necessary to quote the whole book to build up an accurate picture of this swash-bucking ruthless politician who is one of Gandhi's very closest collaborators. Perhaps he best expressed his personality and his fitness to be judged as a responsible statesman in a single sentence which he made just before his arrest. It was at the time of the Cripps mission. The Japanese were sweeping towards the frontiers. Inside those frontiers millions of voices were being raised in discord "lie down and let them trample over us; get up and fight, resist; do not resist."

Now for a dictatorship the prime essential is to bend the nation to the will of the dictator, which means in other words that a state of unity is brought about by force, and yet Nichols after indicting the Congress as a Fascist body with a dictator gives the picture of a country, in which there seemed to be no organised political outlook or identity of interests in their desire to break the imperial hold of Great Britain. Patel might have raised his voice and asked for power to be handed over to any party in India even the dacoits if necessary; But it is the outcome of desperation; the culminating point of disappointment at the repeated professions of British statesmen that they could not see their way to handing over power to the Indians whilst there existed party discords and dissensions:

To offer our most effective argument against his condemnation of the Congress as a Fascist body.

let us invite him to show us the concentration camps; the Gestapo, and the storm troopers so necessary to a Fascist regime? Where the congressmen who dissented were imprisoned if they were not shot? How many Belsens, Dachaus, and Buchenwalds the Congress have in India? How could the label of dictatorship fit the organisation when force in any form cannot be applied to the members of the party or its opponents as understood in Fascist circles, when no concentration camps are in existence and even when the British are not so accommodating as to lend their numerous gaols to house recalcitrant Congressmen who disagree with the Congress big-wigs? When bloody purges are the monopoly of the Axis countries? And above all for a party to use the mailed fist, to ride roughshod over the rights of the other people in India it must have an army fully trained and equipped to enforce its edicts. Surely he would not have us believe that the vast Congress processions of old men, women and little children between five and six shouting slogans of "Bande Mataram! Inquilab Zindabad! and Jai Hind" are the counterparts of those swash-buckling heel-clicking armed minions of Hitler's Third Reich. What sort of Fascist army can these patriots form when they sustain broken heads, bloody noses and end up behind the bars, if they are not lying dead on the roadside because they raised their voices in a mass demand for their rights and took their processions along roads, which were forbidden to them by the authorities. Even the choice of a road to take a procession

along is fraught with peril in a country that is supposed to enjoy the well advertised freedoms of the Empire.

### III.

We are told that one has only to keep one's eyes open in India to see the signs and portents of Fascism sticking out a mile. "Even if one had made no study of the Congress tactics and the Congress record the resemblance to Fascist countries is unmistakable". To draw our attention to this similarity we are asked to consider the question of uniform, the *Khaddar dhoti* and the Gandhi cap which are counterparts of the Nazi shirt and swastika.

If this is all the evidence available one might just as well say look at Lord Baden-Powell's vast army of scouts with their hats, their shirts and scarves etc : which are remarkably similar to the Youth Movement of Nuremberg. Look at the Public schools of Eton and Harrow for example with their distinctive forms of dress. One can go on to infinity drawing such parallels in this absurd fashion but it *does not prove* anything. To put Nichols on the right lines let us inform him of the idea behind the *Khaddar dhoti* and cap. Since western culture has made such deep inroads on Indian life we now witness a very close imitation of the Westerner in practically every aspect of life including dress and speech; The *Khaddar* form of dress was introduced by the Congress for several reasons. (1) Its cheapness, (2) To form as

a substitute for imported cloth which meant that *crores of Rupees* which went out of the country to support English labour and industries could be better employed at home, (3) To stimulate cottage industries and permit the poor to augment their meagre incomes, (4) To awaken the people to the stark poverty of the Indian masses.

Then we have his other argument on Gandhi's understudy on the North West Frontier, the giant of a man Khan Ghaffar Khan, who dressed up all his Muslim followers in red shirts, "The Frontier Gandhi's redshirts are supposed to be apostles of gentleness and non-resistance (The correct word here that Nichols ought to have used is *non-violence*) When thousands of fanatical six footers squat down firmly in front of a few harassed British policemen armed with bamboo canes, the 'gentleness' becomes somewhat academic." The situation described proves the contrary for a man bent on violence would not squat down firmly inviting danger from the Government camp and as to the resources of force available to the British authorities and who do not hesitate to apply it testifies beyond doubt that bamboo sticks or stones are of no avail against lethal weapons. The description of gentleness is not academic but the version of Nichols is abstruse.

If the Congress flag is another Fascist portent the same can be said of the Union Jack, The Muslim League flag or any other flag. Even the prefixes and suffixes or formal addresses of surnames in most countries can be dismissed in the same way. No one insists that Gandhi must be called 'Gandhiji'

His Excellency Lord Wavell's invitation to the Simla parleys he made it abundantly clear that he did not represent the Hindus. To support this fact we have the Hindu Mahasaba and its leaders who represent the Hindu viewpoint.

After advancing his absurd similarities he asks "where precisely is the difference? I am not the only person who would like to know the answer to that question. the Muslims would like to know it too." It would serve no useful point to accept his invitation to study Muslim League pamphlets to find the answer. Such a procedure of consulting and relying on the opinions of opponents of the Congress is ridiculous beyond measure. One might just as well take Churchill's outburst seriously in the House of Commons recently. We quote a press report "Churchill accuses Labour Government of Fascism.

### "Desire to humiliate defeated opponents"

Charges that the Labour Government were imbued with a spirit of Fascism and a desire to humiliate their defeated opponents were levelled by Mr: Churchill in the House of Commons on Thursday opening the second and final day of the debate on the opposition censure motion.

"At home declared Mr: Churchill an attempt to turn Britain into a socialist state will as it develops produce widespread political strife and misery. Abroad the relations with America and Russia had deteriorated, Europe was a nightmare and there were grave decisions to be made in India"

(Needless to say, the Labour Government defeated the Conservative opposition's vote of censure on its domestic policy by 381 votes to 197 London Dec: 8th 1945)

Let us ponder on the opinions expressed and held by other world personalities on Mahatma Gandhi.

(Indian struggle 1942 Prof: Darbara Singh)  
 "Believe me or not Mahatma Gandhi who is the prophet and inspirer of millions of underfed and semi-literate Indians is one of the five most influential men in the world, he is the most impressive personality I have ever met." *Mr: Richard Busvine noted U.S.A. War correspondent.*

"Mahatma Gandhi is the St Paul of our own days' *Romain Rolland.*"

"Mr: Gandhi is one of the greatest thinkers and leaders of our times. I believe he is quite sincere, but with his passionate belief in non-violence he must keep the Congress non-violent and so non-co-operate with a government which is at war. He is the greatest single influence in India or at best in All-India Congress' *Sir: Stafford Cripps.*"

"We are fortunate and grateful that fate has bestowed upon us so luminous a contemporary, a beacon for generations to come" *Albert Einstein.*

"He is a great man; He is one of the

greatest men of the world. He is dominated by high spiritual ideals. Whether those ideals are always practicable in our difficult world is another question." *General Smuts*"

"Mr Gandhi ranks with Sun Yat Sen as the maker of New Asia. Mr: Gandhi is not just George Fox, George Washington or St: Francis of Assisi but I suggest that he has the main ingredients of each in mixture with personal goodness, keen nationalism deep Hindu understanding of man and the world, dialectic faddiness, a passion for social reform and an extremely astute political sense, Mr: Gandhi is the greatest Indian of his time and one of the greatest of all sons of Asia"———Doctor William Patton  
former Secretary of the National Christian  
Council of India."

"There are certain cardinal religious virtues where on Mahatma Gandhi lays most stress. The first is called Truth the second is Ahimsa and the third is Brahma Charya (chastity). He holds that through them an abiding work may be done in this world by mortal man in the fear of God;"

"The two things whereby Mahatma Gandhi's name will live hundreds of years hence are (1) his Khaddar programme and (2) his practice of Satyagraha" *C.F. Andrews.*"

"One day the world would look back on him and salute him as one born out of his



time, and as one who has seen the light in a dark and savage world." *Sir Sarvapalli.*

Yet to Beverley Nichols he was a Fascist dictator equal in character and potentialities to Mussolini and Laval. As regards the accusation of dictatorship we have Gandhi's reply "It is no use damming me as a dictator like Herr Hitler. He does not argue with his co-workers if he may be said to have any. He merely issues orders which can only be disobeyed on pain of death or worse. I argue with my friends for days. I argued at the last meeting for eight days. The members agreed when their reason was satisfied. My sanction with my friends as well as self-styled enemies has ever been reason and love. It is a travesty of truth, therefore to compare me with Hitler or to call me a dictator in any current sense of the term."

"It is equally a travesty of truth to abuse the Congress by calling it a Hindu or communal organisation. It is national in the fullest sense of the term. It is a purely political organisation, with which can undoubtedly be compared the Liberal Party which is without the slightest communal taint. Unfortunately today, although it has politicians who have a record of distinguished service it has admittedly little or no following in the country by reason of its members holding unpopular views. Thus the Congress remains the sole representative national organisation in India with a mass following. It's gains below

not merely to itself but to the whole nation irrespective of caste or creed ('My appeal to the British' by Anand T. Hingorani).

#### IV

In his eagerness to press home his attack on Gandhi and the Congress, Nichols has drawn his evidence from quarters which are unable to survive the barest logical scrutiny. He has deliberately placed his unwarranted interpretation on facts, and built up a picture which is totally unacceptable to the impartial reader. He has quoted Mr. M. N. Roy extensively in his writings against Gandhi, but is he aware of Roy's earlier political history? Since he has given a portion of his career as a politician we may justifiably presume that he is fully aware of his past history. In any case it would be as well to recount how this same M. N. Roy after his sojourn in the foreign countries returned to India only to be lodged into prison by the bureaucracy. However on his release he joined the ranks of the Congress and failed in a bid for its leadership. After this failure he seceded from the Congress found his own party The Radical Democratic Party. It would be futile to expect any admiration of the Congress from his pen otherwise it would place his party in an entirely false position. His writings would be more in conformity with the position taken by him in regard to the Congress, which he left because he was not elected its leader. If he found a "crazy economic structure that is worm eaten and tottering which the

Congress wants to bolster up" then why one might enquire did he join the Congress and aspire for its leadership?

His complete disregard for facts is fully evidenced in his view-point that "However even Gandhi in the months preceeding his imprisonment had begun to drop the mask. He was convinced that Britain was finished and that Japan had won the war. He was anxious to stand well with the little yellow men who he thought would shortly be his new masters"; We presume Nichols can read English and above all understand what he reads, and we could not do better than recommend that he read the *Harijan* and Gandhi's numerous writings before his incarceration in 1942. At no time in his utterances, or writings did he mention a possibility of Britain's defeat. On the contrary he was convinced of the final outcome of the war.

To make his attack on Gandhi complete he quotes Congress bulletins "Those bulletins carried Gandhi's inspiration to its logical conclusion. For example they were blatantly pro-Japanese."

1. "Japan has consistently and persistently pronounced that she has no interest nor lust for conquest of India except that the Britishers are driven out and India becomes free at once."

2. "They were quite open in their incitement to murder, They demanded the immediate formation of Guerilla bands to give surprise attacks on

Tommies. (3) They also issued instructions that Britishers' cooks are to be organised to cook bad food for their masters. A polite way of describing mass poisoning."

"Foot note I. Bombay Congress Bulletin August 17th 1942. 2. Leaflet entitled "Workers of India issued in the name of the A.I.C.C. office August 27th 1942. 3 Ibid"

In the footnote he mentions that these instructions were issued on the 17th and 27th of August 1942 respectively. But what he fails to appreciate and *which is not lost on the* reader is that Gandhi was arrested on Aug: 9th 1942, from which period he was not allowed contact with the outside world. How then can he hold a man responsible for the actions of the people who are not directly or indirectly under his (Gandhi's) influence? (All the leaders were imprisoned at the time.)

Gandhi has enunciated the methods to be employed in Non-violence but has expressly laid down that all means for safeguarding life should be taken when measures for disorganising transport, communications, and paralysing industry is resorted to. In future if Nichols desires to quote from certain sources we would advise him to quote *fully* and not pieces torn from their context. Proof of his failure to quote fully, and interpret correctly can be ascertained by reading the works referred to, in the original papers as 'Harijan', 'Young India' and the 'Quit India Resolution' up to Aug: 8th 1942.

As a prophet Nichols cuts a sorry figure. : He prophesies that "Every day that Gandhi has been in goal has seen a rapid increase in the young Indians who either voluntarily or involuntarily are being brought into the orbit of the war effort which means into the orbit of the twentieth century. From thousands of villages young men are flocking to the army centres, where for the first time in their lives they are taught the rudiments of hygiene and discipline and are given their first sight of the magic of modern machinery. In spite of the frenzied efforts of Congress to boycott it, the exhibition has been an unqualified success particularly with the younger men. It has marked a turning point in their lives. They have come from sleepy villages, which if Gandhi had his way would go on sleeping, and suddenly the whole wonder box of modern science is thrown open before them. They stare in amazement and soon they are lost, irrevocably seduced, walking in a new world from which even the hypnotic voice of the Mahatma can never recall them".

"For into this new world the Mahatma does not fit, not by any stretch of the imagination. Those young men whether Gandhi knows it or not, are lost to him forever. And by the end of 1944 it is calculated that there will be over 40 million of them".

Recent history proves the contrary. These very same lads who have been brought into the orbit of the twentieth century. have come back imbued with a strong sense of patriotism. They have

gone abroad, and the love for their freedom has been awakened, and for the first time they begin to understand the teachings and exhortations of Gandhi whom they were unable to understand before; They are more freedom conscious now than ever before, and some of these lads had joined the Indian National Army and fought against the British. The recent Indian National Army Trials proved one thing that the hypnotic voice of the Mahatma and their motherland means more to them than the yoke of the British who can never enslave them as before.

This applies to the lads of the village, but what of those boys who have drunk from the English founts of knowledge, who have seen all the wonder boxes of the world, and the magic of western civilisation. How does he account for their championship of the Congress cause?

But before we proceed further one question must be put to Beverly Nichols. Why has he singled out the Congress & the Hindus for his attack. Surely there are other communities also which merit the same verdict. He has attacked them politically, when all parties have more or less the same outlook. The Hindu religion when all religions, denominations are guilty of deviations and accretions from the true doctrine. In medicine he attacks *Ayurveda* while we have the Muslim counterpart of *Unani* professing the same characteristics; Music which has had the contribution of every community. The film Industry he indicts as Hindu when it draws it's employees from every caste

and creed in India. And above all from the political parties which desire the withdrawal of British rule. He picks on the ubiquitous Hindu and the Congress. That other communities also desire their withdrawal we have a press report dated Jan 11th 1946 Amritsar.

"British should be asked to quit India, Tara Singh's view." "Civil War better than foreign rule."

"Amritsar Jan 11th 'A united request to the British to quit India should be made immediately by all the political parties in the country. No matter what the consequences are. Even if they have to face a civil war and an internecine warfare they should face it now rather than to leave a legacy of anarchy and chaos for their sons & grandsons."

"We should not be afraid of getting rid of the foreign domination for fear of a civil war, since no price is too dear for the freedom of the country. These observations were made by M. Tara Singh in the course of a 90 minute interview with the Tribune correspondent who met him at the Shahid Sikh Missionary College this morning."

"The Akali leader said it was rather selfish on their part not to decide the issue of India's independence. They must face the realities of the situation as they were. Swaraj or unity could not be thrust on them by any outside power. It had to be developed from within, no settlement howsoever noble and beneficial could bring in independence to the country, unless and until it was mutually agreed upon by the communities themselves. In this con-

nection he referred to the Communal Award which had only brought hatred amongst the various communities."

"The Master was confident of arriving at a satisfactory settlement amongst the leaders of the different communities immediately after the departure of the British from this country. The hope of a settlement outweighed the fear of internecine warfare," he added."

"Asked if any useful purpose would be served by the visit of the British Parliamentary Delegation he said that it was useless. Nothing could be achieved by such visits as long as the parties did not agree among themselves. There would be neither Pakistan nor any other thing. A united rule of the Hindus Sikhs and Muslims could alone solve their problems.

Commenting on the provincial politics in the Punjab he envisaged the possibility of a coalition Government of the Congress, Akalis, and Unionists.

## V

A thumb nail sketch of the Congress would disprove Beverley Nichols theories of it's Fascist principles,

Professor Rushbrook Williams once said' that neither Indians nor Englishmen can claim to be it's sole creators since it was the logical outcome of British rule. However it's origin owes itself chief-



ly to the efforts of two Englishmen A.O. Hume and Sir William Wedderburn. It was in acknowledgement of this fact that Gokhale declared "that no Indian could have started the Indian National Congress."

It was Hume who first wrote a public letter on the first of March 1883 addressed to the graduates of the Calcutta University, requesting them to co-operate with him in the work for the political regeneration of India. He organised the political consciousness in the country and officiated as general Secretary of the Congress for many years during which period he brought it to the notice of the Government of India and to the British people.

Official patronage to Hume's organisation was accorded by Lord Dufferin the Governor-General at that time.

To Hume's appeal for 50 true good men to be the founders of the Congress the first meeting was attended by 72 delegates. Local committees were formed at Karachi, Ahmedabad, Surat, Bombay, Madras, Poona, Calcutta, Benares, Allahabad, Lucknow, Agra, and Lahore. Its first President was an Englishman. Hume worked indefatigably in India and England to further India's cause through the Indian National Congress. In England He had the invaluable help of Sir William Wedderburn.

For a long time the Congress functioned as a sycophantic organisation and passing for its opening resolution the presentation of respectful loyalty

to the Queen Empress followed by others mainly concerned with the growing association of Indians in the administration of the country. It's tone formerly advisory now gradually lost its slavery of mind and spirit till now *equality* and *independence* are demanded as a matter of right and *not* begged as a concession.

Due to the East India Company and the Government of India, the Congress began to emerge slowly into the picture with meetings of its delegates from all over India. The Act of 1813 sanctioned funds for education and the committee of public instruction headed by Macaulay decided that it was the duty of the Government to foster the development of the English language and education in India. This aim of establishing the English language as a means of converting men of Indian blood and colour to western ideas and culture, eventually led to a study of the writings of Thomas Paine, Mazzini and John Stuart Mill. (The exponents of literature on revolt) It infused a love of freedom as opposed to the policy of British rule in withholding the keys of power from Indian hands. Hence started the struggle for independence.

From 1793 to 1833 all posts in the East India Company were held by covenanted hands but by the Act of Parliament 1833 some of these posts were held open to Indians irrespective of caste, creed or colour. A knowledge of English was indispensable for service in the Government, consequently English

became popular in most schools and colleges which were to a large extent the recruiting ground for Government services.

At the Second Congress meeting Dadabhai Naroji suggested the undertaking of social reform. With western education as a means of communication between the educated classes the first Bengali periodical made its appearance in 1816 to be followed by others, till the onus of political education rested solely on the shoulders of the Indian Press.

The regime which made possible the social relation between East and West became untenable after the Mutiny of 1857 which left bitter memories on both sides. Hostility on one and fear on the other. The Englishman for the first time felt himself to be an exile and acted accordingly. The Government's insistence of preserving the higher posts for Europeans helped to foster this spirit of discontent, which was amply supported by the antagonism aroused by the Ilbert Bill of 1870 which was introduced into the Governor-General's Council despite severe European opposition to remove the judicial disqualification to which Indian members of the Indian Civil Service were subject in regard to the trial of European members.

Early opposition to the growth of the Indian National Congress was not wanting. Official and non-official quarters including a score of political sections of the Indian press, as the *Pioneer* and

to the Queen Empress followed by others mainly concerned with the growing association of Indians in the administration of the country. It's tone formerly advisory now gradually lost its slavery of mind and spirit till now *equality* and *independence* are demanded as a matter of right and *not* begged as a concession.

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in these efforts at introducing industries, social emancipation and self-government.

In the year 1897 the Congress became estranged from the Government when it touched upon matters of racial discrimination by the authorities, and insisted on mentioning such Acts of British Parliament as the 'Magna Carta' and the 'Habeas Corpus' Acts, and argued that the laws which informed the British Constitution should also inform the British administration in India. They held firm to their ground that all disabilities before the Indian be removed, and that on the racial question no concession was possible except that of equality in every respect. F. M. 'De' Mello in the 'Indian National Congress' sums up the situation at that time "It was in a sense inevitable that British rule in India should have provoked discontent and 'sedition'. So long as Indians were allowed to admire English political institutions without being permitted to adopt them like the English language, English dress and English ways of living there was bound to be conflict. Pandit Madan Malaviya explained this in words which demand quotation. 'What is an Englishman without representative institutions? Why not an Englishman at all, a mere sham, a base imitation, and I often wonder as I look round at our nominally English magnates how they have the face to call themselves Englishmen and yet deny us representative institutions and struggle to maintain despotic ones. Representative institutions are as much a part of the true Briton as his language and his literature.....

similar associations endeavoured to discredit the Congress as an authoritative body representing Indian opinion. It is also of interest to note that among the presidents of the Indian National Congress no fewer than four Europeans took the presidential chair during the first twenty years of its inception. Hume was general Secretary of nineteen of the first twenty two Congress sessions. The Congress owes much of its earlier character and strength, and above all its existence to the indefatigable efforts of such Englishmen as A. O. Hume, Sir William Wedderburn, George Yule, Sir William Cotton, Eardley Norton, Charles Bradlaugh, Col: Olcott, Annie Besant, and the criticisms of the system of Government by the Manchester Guardian. Their efforts were successful in passing the political reforms in India and expansion of the Legislative Council under the India Councils Act of 1892.

At the sixth Congress session in 1891 they drew the attention of the Government to the miseries suffered by the masses, who suffered from an insufficiency of food and demanded the reduction of the heavy burden of the Salt Tax. The preference for *Swadeshi* goods was advocated and *Khaddar* became the initial form of boycott of imported cloth. Gradually the Congress lost its apologetic tone and protested against Forest Laws, Land Revenue System, abolition of the India Council and the Arms Act which did not permit Indians to bear arms even for utilitarian purposes. Gokhale and Tilak figured prominently

communal prejudices through advocating violent policies. His form of nationalism took on rather an aggressive Hindu outlook than *Indian* in the broad or general sense of the term, and earned for him the leadership of the left wing of the Congress which remained outside the Congress till 1916. As a measure against extremist propaganda the Government passed the Seditious Meetings Act, the Press Act and the Explosives Act.

The Minto-Morley Reforms and revocation of the partition of Bengal in 1911 afforded great satisfaction to the Congress though it started separate electorates for the Muslims & which arrangements were accepted as settled by the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms 1918 and current White Paper,

At the outbreak of the Great War the Congress made it's stand for 'self government', or to put it precisely a joint partnership on equal terms. At this juncture the Lucknow pact was signed with the Muslim League who were keenly interested in the achievement of home rule. This move by the two rival parties surprised both the British and Indian Governments, and the latter intervened by interning Mrs: Annie Besant, who was prominently associated with the Congress. She was elected its president in 1917.

The Montague - Chelmsford scheme left an air of doubt and suspicion which was not dispelled by the series of events that followed in quick succession of the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre which helped the Congress to

India has found a voice at last in this great Congress, and in it, and through it, we call on England to be true to her traditions, her instincts and herself and grant us our rights as freeborn British citizens".

"This was 1886, today Pandit Malaviya and many others with him are equally not enamoured of British citizenship."

Hume and Wedderburn encouraged the idea of waiting upon the Government for political concessions and this attitude enabled all communities to join the Congress. In 1890 it was formally recognised by the Government as a liberal political party and enjoyed the position as the sole political organ of the country, till the controversy over the partition of Bengal which resulted in the formation of the Muslim League as its competitor. The term of office of Governor-General held by Lord Curzon did much to strengthen the spirit of resistance in the Congress. His passing of the Official Secrets Act and the Gagging Act despite universal opposition aroused the condemnation of the people. Resolutions were moved to protest against the repressive measures adopted by the Government to crush antagonism.

1906 disclosed a growth within the Congress of a tendency to extremism as opposed to the constitutional methods of the older leaders. A significant event of this period was the rise of Tilak. He generated a wave of nationalism among the younger, fiery element with his genius for stirring up popular



that they must work out their own salvation through the production of their own industries.

The first setback to the campaign was the turn the Khilafat agitation took in the south in the shape of the Moplah Rebellion. The next setback was the riots which broke out in Bombay and other cities on the arrival of the Prince of Wales. Matters came to a head with the Chauri-Chaura tragedy in which a mob of rioters killed and burnt over 20 policemen who had assaulted them. On March 1st 1922 Gandhi was arrested and the Non-co-operation movement fizzled out into nothing.

The movement brought into prominence one defect that the masses misunderstood the implications of non-violence, and that the gap between the leader and the masses was too great to be bridged right away with the barest political training. Gandhi's removal caused a split in the Congress which was headed respectively by C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru. Several demands for a Round Table Conference were put forward to the Labour Government under Ramsay Macdonald and the Conservative Government which followed, but to no purpose. A lull in Indian politics was the inevitable sequel and though the Congress met annually the sessions were marked with petty controversies.

Gandhi was released from gaol following an operation for appendicitis, and after a short spell of retirement led the Congress once more in another passive resistance movement. 1928 saw

strengthen its hold on the masses.

The Hunter Commission Report on General Dyér's conduct of the Amritsar incident, and the refusal of the House of Lords to endorse its censure on the general in question, and postwar discontent were factors that led to the inauguration of the non-co-operation movement. The Khilafat agitation by the Indian Muslims for their Turkish co-religionists strengthened the movement considerably when both parties were united under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. It was Gandhi's first major role in this country.

Gandhi's great spiritual strength and his reputation in South Africa, coupled with his unique and typically Indian method of resisting the Government appealed to the masses, and though his gospel of Non-violence was extremely difficult to follow his influence in the Congress is still a *live* force. The important and revolutionary change in the Congress under Gandhi was the compulsory use of Khaddar (homespun) as a uniform for all Congress members to give a filip to cottage industries and thus help the Indian labourer.

The campaign of non-co-operation started throughout the country with the resignation of non-co-operators from every government office and honour; boycott of government subsidised educational institutions, boycott of foreign goods and the refusal to vote or pay taxes. This movement was responsible for awakening in the masses a spark of political consciousness and making them realise

that they must work out their own salvation through the production of their own industries.

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the Bardoli agitation at which satyagraha led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was carried out more successfully. The Simon Commission then gave them the first opportunity to threaten the launching of a mass, non-violent Civil-disobedience campaign, but the only factor which held this in abeyance was the promise of a Round Table Conference in London held out by Lord Irwin on Oct. 31st 1929. The failure to give a definite date for the Round Table Conference and the delay of the Simon Commission in writing its report were instrumental in allowing Gandhi to launch his proposed campaign of Civil Disobedience.

January 26th 1930 was observed as Independence day throughout India and early in March Gandhi led his band of volunteers to defy the Salt Laws. Meetings and processions were held all over India, but at Chittagong terrorism broke out in the shape of a raid on the Armoury, and assassinations of Government officials and despite the Congress repudiation of any connection with the terrorists, violent mob instincts were aroused in some parts of the country. The conflict between the Congress and the Government continued till the Irwin-Gandhi Agreement was reached and the Round Table Conference became a practical possibility and which was attended by Gandhi. The Second and Third Round Table Conferences also proved complete failures owing to the various communities being unable to agree amongst themselves on a constitution for India, devoid of conflicting safeguards for the suspicious

*minorities.* In 1931 Gandhi returned to India a much disillusioned man, but in the meantime the situation had altered considerably, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was already in goal. Gandhi was arrested on Jan: 4th 1932 for proclaiming the resumption of the Civil Disobedience movement. The government measures were so effective that before the end of the year the movement was completely suppressed. In it's conflict with the Government the Congress had been routed and though stern measures were adopted to crush the organisation through freezing its financial resources, victimising its members and preventing further recruitment the Government failed to accomplish its object of breaking the spirit of the Congress for it grew stronger with the passage of time.

Whilst in gaol, Gandhi made a historic fast as a protest against the Prime Minister's Communal Award in 1932 and which resulted in the famous Poona Pact which placed the 'Depressed classes' in the Hindu constituencies as regards electoral purposes and also increased the Scheduled class seats in the Legislatures.

It's history during the last decade leading up to the 'Quit India' stand, the 1942 struggle and the Simla Parleys, prove beyond doubt that it has been the leading political organisation for the last sixty years. It has endeavoured successfully to keep to its pledge to fight for India's independence as evidenced by a little tablet on the premises of the Gokuldas Tejpal Hall, off Golwalla

Tank bearing an eloquent testimony to the brave and gallant band of patriots who laid the foundation of the Congress,

"In this historic Hall on the 28th December 1885 a band of gallant patriots laid the foundation of the Indian National Congress, which during these fifty years has been built up stone by stone, tier by tier by the Faith and Devotion, Courage and Sacrifice, of Countless men and women, as the pledge and symbol of their Invincible purpose, to secure to India Their Motherland Her Legitimate Birthright of Swaraj. This tablet is paced to commemorate the occasion of its

**GOLDEN JUBILEE**  
28th Dec: 1935"

It's history is a record of monumental suffering and service for the Indian cause and an epic of courage of the masses in their fight against one of the mightiest Empires of the World.

To Beverley Nichols, who is so bent on picking out the microbe of Fascism in the imperial colony, we could not do better than draw his attention to the following press notices testifying to the existence of Fascism in his own Shakespearean 'Emerald Isle', and the ambitions of Moseley for whom Nichols held nothing but praise in his "Men Do Not Weep" and "This England".

"Hitler 'Cults in English Hamlet; London Nov: 30th '45—Secrets of the recently discovered Hitler worship cult with headquarters in a lovely

mansion in Southern England may soon be proved by British Home Office officials says Reuter."

"The cult calling itself the League of Christian Reform has been front page news in the national press here since it's existence was discovered a few days ago after the auction of the German Embassy effects in London."

"The British Home Secretary Mr. Chuter Ede will be asked in the House of Commons on Thursday to investigate the membership and operation of the League "whose objects are veneration of Hitler and perpetuation of his memory".

### "Second Messiah"

"The address of the League's headquarters is Kingdom House in a tiny Sussex hamlet where villagers are annoyed at the occupants of Kingdom House, which includes four women disciples. The League membership as far as is known is eight including two men, who were detained under British Defence regulations during the war."

"The canon of the parish where the headquarters are situated has handed to the police a league pamphlet, which is said to describe Hitler as the Second Messiah.' The canon has also warned his parishioners and clergy to be on guard against the people at Kingdom House."

"A British navy man at home on leave in the hamlet told reporters of his intention to organise villagers for a protest march to Kingdom House to have the Fascists thrown out".

"During the war the hamlet was bombed by the Luftwaffe": Reuter.

"London Fascists Salute Moseley, London Dec: 16th 1945"—More than a thousand men and women, some in military uniform raised their hands in the Fascist Salute to Sir Oswald Moseley former leader of the British Union of Fascists in London last night."

"They were cheering their old leader at a meeting which was ostensibly a dance held in a cafe".

"Sir Oswald told the meeting that Fascists would not forget their suffering and would see to it that their enemies would not forget it"—Reuter.

And what of the British Union of Fascists Mr. Nichols? Who adorned His Majesty's prisons during Britain's fight to the death with her Fascist enemies?

It is indeed strange to record the reactions of Fascist or pro-Fascist lackies when Fascism languishes in British prisons or hypocritically takes the form of religion as the "League of Christian Reform".



## CHAPTER XIV

## Hate Found an Empire Pakistan.

This is supposed to be the most important part of Nichol's book which indicts everything Hindu and extols the virtues of the Muslims: Before approaching this most urgent problem, let us quote the learned author whose viewpoint sums up British Foreign policy in a nutshell.

"This dream empire may one day come out of the clouds and place itself on the world's maps with a bang. I am one of those who believe not only that this will happen, but that it *must* happen. If it does, an entirely new situation will have arisen in Asia which will shatter the existing balances of power and drastically modify the policies of every country in the world" (Von I).

The last few sentences gives one a clearer insight into the historical association of British 'die-hardism' with separatist politics. One often wonders how a small island nation of 40 millions could continue to exist as a sovereign power for centuries, let alone dictating her foreign policy whilst being hemmed in by powerfull neighbours. Ever since the dawn of power-politics Britain has managed to maintain her supremacy through clever statemanship of playing one powerfull neighbour against the other, thus creating an effective balance of power. All such powerfull nations of the earlier days as France, Spain, Germany, & Portugal have fallen victims to the intrigues of clever British diplomatic moves, to

prevent them from becoming stronger and successfully challenging Great Britain. It therefore comes as no surprise to find that these tactics have been applied with equal success to maintain his position in India. In fact this game has enjoyed such a measure of success that Edgar Snow noted for his acuteness of observation, and the soundness of his judgement could not help remarking that although Indo-British relationship had been established for more than 200 years the peoples were as far apart as when the first British trader stepped on Indian soil.

If there were any sincerity in Britain's oft-repeated appeals for unity, one would have thought that with Britain's propensity for wise and astute statemanship she would have succeeded in the space of 200 years in welding the various communities of India into one united nation. But sufficient evidence is available from authoritative sources to prove that nothing is further from their avowed purpose.

The Communal Awards, Separate Electorates, the Minto-Morley Reforms, the promises of protection of the Muslim interests, all tell the same tale, which convinces even *Mr. Smith* that the game of chess is well played even down to the partiality shown in Government services to the various communities despite their communal representation or numerical ratio.

Still more authoritative evidence can be marshalled through the diaries of the former Governors-General and Secretaries of State for

India during the early part of the twentieth century. They were outspoken enough to record in print their Machiavellian designs.

Far from Nichols' eyewash in sham prophecies of *Pakistan* shattering the existing balances of power, we now perceive what a marvellous trump card the largest Muslim Party has placed in the British hand. As a counterpoise to the All-India Congress organisation it has proved most effective to the Secretary of State for India, who is now able to use it as an answer to the country's legitimate aspirations in the same terms as the proverbial question as to which came first the *hen or the egg*?

Before we cross the borders of this dream empire, let us study the back ground which gave rise to the present political impasse.

Nichols has been kind enough to give us a short history of communal discord between the Muslims and the Hindus of Bombay from Feb: 1929 to April 1938. During the ten years he has cited the number of victims killed at 518 and injured 4378. He has cited Bombay as an instance of what does occur all over India, but he has been very astute in not mentioning that of all the cities in India, Bombay and Calcutta share the largest total and occasions for this display of mob violence, and also that riots only take place in the largest cities of India; and these very large cities can be counted on the fingers of one hand. If this record of his is held as a criterion of communal discord in the country necessitating

its partition as envisaged in 'PAKISTAN' one can only be amused at the impudence. For one thing he has omitted to mention that ninety per cent of these casualties were the result of firing done by troops or policemen and the figures quoted by him in comparison with traffic accidents either in Great Britain or this country sink into insignificance. This molehill which has been converted into a mountain through his not very clever efforts appear diabolical when one realises that *Verdict on India* was penned in 1944. One is bound to inquire why the author has left out the remaining six years? A fact that is highly significant and full of implications, no matter from what angle it might be viewed.

That British bullets have taken their toll of the casualties (he seeks to impress us with), is mentioned in his next few paras. "In the end of course! It is always settled by a handful of British boys like the platoon of 25 men of the Royal Sussex Regiment who recently dispersed a crowd of 25,000 fanatics at Karachi. This seething mob had gathered to avenge the execution of the Muslim murderer of a Hindu, who had insulted Islam. They were on their way to the heart of the city to pillage, loot, and murder. The police had already been overwhelmed so the British boys were called in. They were ordered to fire. 47 people were killed and of course, the Congress screamed to high heaven that this was another example of the tyranny of "Imperial might".

• • "One boy per thousand religious fanatics !

Imperial Might! that's pretty good when you think it out".

It is pretty good when you think it out. The 'recently' alluded to by him, was an occurrence that took place over 10 years ago (1935) & from the story the reader will rightly conclude that the crowd of rioters bent on pillage, arson & murder were Nichols' 'fair-haired' boys the Muslims. Yet the Congress which is largely Hindu saw fit to protest against 'Imperial might' because 47 Muslims were killed. According to Beverley Nichols the Hindus and the Muslims are the sworn enemies of each other and if this were so, one would imagine that the shooting of 47 Muslims would have been an occasion for great rejoicing in the Hindu camps. 'Pretty Good' is the only description one can give for this type of reasoning.

Apart from the actual firing we see in this explanation a method of reasoning *Par excellence*. The actual facts were that the body was to be carried through the city as a mark of respect for this presumed martyr and that the authorities feared that it would result in riots between the two communities. A few rounds were fired into the crowds before they dispersed. There are thousands of eye witnesses to this episode. But the delicate part of this story comes in when he states that there were 1000 fanatics to one British boy. We are asked to believe this fairy story. If these men were bent on murder pillage and loot surely one British boy would not have been more than a match for them? Secondly we are

invited to believe that the national emasculation of India is so complete that 25 British boys could withstand the attacks of 25,000 men in the face of such declarations by General Sir Claude Auchinleck on Indian manhood. "I am proud to think of the great part played in bringing about this victory by our Indian soldiers, British and American generals have been proud and glad to have these fine soldiers under their command. They have gained glory for themselves, their kinsmen and their country. They have established throughout the world for all time the reputation of the Indian soldier as a great fighting man".

Michael Fielding wrote "The more I have seen and studied the Indian Army as a casual observer from the United States, the more I am convinced that India has a glorious future ahead of her; a future which lies mainly in the hands of her sons and daughters, who will prove themselves worthy of their nations great destiny."

Surely there must have been some small proportion in that crowd who would have used the same brand of courage, which earned their country men Victoria Crosses in both World Wars to overcome *only* 25 British boys. Several conclusions can be drawn from this story. If each British boy was more than a match for a 1000 Indians we wonder why the British ever troubled to recruit and train Indians for both the Great Wars, particularly when the British boys could have done the job successfully despite 'Dunkirk' or fighting 'glorious retreats' like Gallipoli.

Secondly if Nichols version is correct we can conclude that the crowd was not bent on violence; And if it were bent on violence the weapons used by the military were directed on a defenceless mob who had as usual their ubiquitous bamboo sticks. Thirdly if 25 British boys did the firing there must have been others in reserve to teach these fanatics that heavier punishment was in store for them, if they refused to submit to the white-man's order. All of which merely goes to prove that this literary eyewash of Nichols is of no avail in the light of sober facts.

What are the causes of these internecine affairs? The answer is simple. *Despair* is the root cause for this deflection of a unity in *will* and *aim*. To reach this conclusion our study has to go back to the time of the Indian Munity, which has been more of a landmark in Indian politics rather than Indian history. The defeat dispelled the last Muslim hopes of ever regaining their lost positions as masters of a large portion of the Indian subcontinent. They had even lost faith in themselves. The Government pursued a hostile policy against the Muslims whom they regarded as antagonistic to their rule and patronised the Hindus.

The latter were not slow to take advantage of this form of favouritism and began to adopt the language and culture of their rulers in order to secure whatever priveleges their subservience to the imperial *will* could achieve.

at once we are able to see how India has arrived at her present political *impasse*. It was inevitable at this juncture that in desperation they turned on each other to relieve their feelings of frustration. They began to attach more importance to their own petty communal interests rather than the larger one of the country as a whole, because their joint efforts had proved abortive times out of number. We can appreciate in this light their mutual distrust, their abnormal fears, extravagant demands, mutual recriminations, and extreme pettiness in communal matters, and above all their scramble for political favours doled out by the Government.

The educated Muslim classes which had secured and enjoyed the patronage of the Government endeavoured to muster the Muslim masses behind them, as a support for the continuation of their selfish positions. The means most effective in this case was to deliberately inject the fear of the Hindus into them, through the medium of their religion. How well this ruse has succeeded can be witnessed to this very day in which the Muslims betray an inexplicable fear of Hindu domination.

Now we arrive at Jinnah's and Nichols' Utopia named 'Pakistan'.

A Muslim youth at Cambridge University named Rahmat Ali was the first to conceive of the idea of Pakistan. He penned his pamphlets which found their way into the offices



For a time the Muslim community withstood the brunt of imperial displeasure till its renowned leader Sir Ahmed Khan realised that the salvation of his followers depended to a very large extent on accepting foreign rule as a *fact accompli*. He guided his community into the ethics of western culture with the help of such English educationists as Mr. Archbold, Sir Theodore Morrison and Mr. Beck of the M.A.O. college Aligarh. The educated classes absorbed these lessons and through the religious susceptibilities of the Muslim masses kept their community out of any agitation against the Government, and relied on waiting on the pleasure of their new masters. After 12 or 13 hundred years the Muslims were being initiated into the art of slavery.

All went well for a time till the treatment of Turkey at the hands of Great Britain which caused resentment in the Muslim ranks of this country. The spirit of renunciation and sacrifice seemed uppermost and they joined hands with the Congress in the Khilafat Agitation. They jointly undertook to employ Civil Disobedience and non-co-operation under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi which, later degenerated into mob violence, and was quickly suppressed by the authorities. *Despair* became the predominant theme in their aspirations. The Hindus had tried their methods and failed miserably, whilst the Muslims felt that their last hopes of ever regaining their lost heritage were completely blasted. The repeated failures caused an intense feeling of despair, that

at once we are able to see how India has arrived at her present political *impasse*. It was inevitable at this juncture that in desperation they turned on each other to relieve their feelings of frustration. They began to attach more importance to their own petty communal interests rather than the larger one of the country as a whole, because their joint efforts had proved abortive times out of number. We can appreciate in this light their mutual distrust, their abnormal fears, extravagant demands, mutual recriminations, and extreme pettiness in communal matters, and above all their scramble for political favours doled out by the Government.

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of members of Parliament, Islamic writers, and prominent authors on India. His enthusiasm was shared by several other young men who had joined him in this crusade. He sent this idea to Dr: Iqbal and Mr: M.A. Jinnah whilst they were at the Round Table Conference. It is unnecessary here to recount in detail the part played by the minorities at the London Round Table Conference, to extract concessions from Tory Conservatism at the expense of Indian national interests. Suffice it however to relate that though neither partitioning nor the enunciation of the 'two-nation' theory was raised, the scheme was turned down by such Muslim leaders as Sir Mahommed Zafrullah and Mr: Yusuf Ali as impracticable. Even our Sultan of Pakistan Mr: M.A. Jinnah refused to consider it.

Later they approached Jinnah again and one must confess that despite its preposterous nature he has been clever enough to realise its potentialities and being an able lawyer that he is, he has begun to use it as a trump card in his political gamble with the Congress. Though this idea of Pakistan has been attacked on every ground of economics, politics, geographical, historical, spiritual and sentimental, it still continues to haunt the Indian political stage like Hamlet's ghost.

Not only did the Muslims possess a wonderful 'bargaining counter' to achieve more than their communal rights, this claim placed a still better card in the hands of the British

who have ever been seeking to discover fissures and crevices in the Indian body politic.

The Government of India Act of 1935 representing over 6½ years of labour fell far short of Indian national aspirations. The Act was assailed by several communities for several conflicting reasons, but its chief recommendation lay in the fact that it recognised federation as a representative type of Government for India. The first big blunder of the Congress was in 1937 when it came into office and refused to form joint or coalition ministries with the Muslim League. This bankruptcy of wisdom on the part of the Congress in ignoring the Muslim League, had its fruit in estranging the League still further with their separatist policy. Then followed the famous Pirpur and Shareef reports which were the equivalents of a White paper on the injustices of the Congress ministries against the Muslims. Though these reports were proved to be without any substantial foundation whatsoever, they rallied the Muslim masses round their leaders and became more political minded.

The first big break for the League came during the Second Great World War when the Congress came into serious conflict with the Government. The Congress ministries withdrew leaving the political field entirely to the Muslim league. Thus in 1940 the League passed the Lahore Resolution, the terms of which are well known and clarified Jinnah's changing outlook which was first noticed in the Sind Provincial Muslim League

meeting in 1938, when the seeds for the partition scheme began to sprout into the ultimate 'two-nation' theory, with two separate federations and no common centre as opposed to the Government of India Act of 1935. It is noteworthy to bear in mind that even in 1940 he did not define the areas which were to form the Muslim state.

In 1940 Jinnah threw open an invitation to the British Government to place their confidence in Muslim leadership. That Mr. Leopold Amery the Secretary of State for India made full use of this offer is materially supported by recent historical facts and his reactionary attitude to Indian political aspirations by utilising the League stand point or sheet-anchor 'Pakistan' difference as his main argument.

That encouragement to the Muslims from official quarters was, not lacking is fully evident from the text of the Minto-Morley reforms. The Minto boon of granting the Muslims greater representation than their numerical ratio has been the seed, which has today given us the chimera of 'Pakistan'.

The idea, extent and scope of Pakistan which was not fully elaborated till the Gandhi-Jinnah talks in 1944 was based on the hypothesis of two nations, both separate and irreconcilable in every sphere from religion to aptitudes, utilising the doctrine of self-determination to achieve its main object of partitioning India into two separate zones of *Hindustan and Pakistan*. *To the present day Jinnah*

has not succeeded in explaining how this solution of his is necessary to the welfare of the country as a whole and whether it is feasible from any serious point of view.

For the physical aspect the Utopia of Jinnah is neither contiguous in territory nor homogeneous in terms of population. He claimed on behalf of his Muslim followers such Provinces as the Punjab, N. W. Frontier Provinces, Sind, Baluchistan in the N. West; and Bengal and Assam in the North East, to form his sovereign state of Pakistan, in which the Muslims would maintain their own essential services as the Army, Customs Excise and Railways etc: Its prominent feature was to provide adequate mandatory safeguards for the *minorities*.

This solution to the burning communal question cannot survive even the barest scrutiny. According to the 1941 census the Muslim population approximated 92½ millions spread over the length and breadth of India. With the exception of the provinces of Bengal and the Punjab there is no contiguous severable territory. In the remainder the population is entirely intermingled. Hence a transfer of population is as impracticable as any plan of territorial redistribution. Between the North-West & North-East there is a large stretch of territory populated by a predominance of Hindus. Out of the 28 districts in the Punjab alone 17 in the West are predominantly Muslim whilst the remaining 11 are non-Muslim including Hindus and Sikhs.

In Bengal we are faced with a similar prob-

lem, the ratio, being 55 Muslims, to 41, other communities. In Assam the Muslims represent roughly one third of the population. Sind, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier provinces have a predominance of the Muslim community, though there is still the problem of intermingling.

A careful study of the population question leaves us still with approximately 60 million Muslims in Jinnah's promised land with almost 45 million non-Muslims as a minority. It is hardly conceivable that 40 odd millions would consider Jinnah's adequate safeguards as a sufficient inducement for them to jeopardise their future particularly when they will not have a voice in the government. The question then arises of the 30 million Muslims that will be left in Hindustan, and above all Jinnah has not taken into account the status of the Indian states within Pakistan, whose rulers' privileges of sovereignty have been guaranteed by the Paramount Power. Quite a considerable proportion of the Muslim community are State's subjects.

Apart from the fact that such a huge minority in Pakistan and Hindustan can be a disrupting influence several questions crop up in the readers mind which need a satisfactory answer.

(1) Who will enforce the observance of the pledges safeguards or guarantees to the minorities in Pakistan? If it is the British that Jinnah relies upon to see fair play in both Hindustan and Pakistan it will only be a repetition of past

history in connection with the British authority resulting in a perpetuation of foreign domination. (2) How will the governing body of Pakistan administer the North-East and North-West territories of this Utopia except through a corridor which again will require a third power's interference to maintain its *status quo*? Recent history of 'corridors' regardless of their geographical position show clearly that they are not conducive to national or international peace. (3) If the Muslims as a large minority in India claim Pakistan as a means of self-determination for fear of losing their identity or communal rights, so do the non-Muslims who form just as large a proportion of the minority question in 'Pakistan' by the same argument, have equal rights in claiming secession and establishing sovereign rights through other 'stans'. If this point is conceded we will have every community establishing 'stans' *ad infinitum* in India, till this disease covers the whole world. (4) If the Muslim League holds that the 'adequate safeguards' are sufficient guarantees for the 40 odd million minority in Pakistan of 100 million people it would be just as feasible to expect such safeguards to be equally effective in India as a whole for the 92 million Muslim minority out of a total population of over 400 million inhabitants? (5) How can peace and amity be secured when the Muslims on the border line of Hindustan will claim affinity with the Muslims in Pakistan and the Hindus on the borders of Pakistan will lay a similar claim of affinity to the Hindus in Hindustan?



What proves to be the biggest bluff of the present day is Jinnah's 'two-nation' theory. it is strange indeed that so many centuries have passed and that Jinnah himself has spent the better part of his life before discovering that there were two separate nations in India. Indian history at no time has ever recorded the size and number of Muslim invasions of this country to measure up to the colossal figures of the Muslim community as returned by the census of 1941.

Economically we realise that Pakistan will be far from self-sufficient. It will have to support the two deficit provinces of Sind and the North-West Frontier Provinces which receive a subvention of approximately one crore (100,00,000) each. Bengal will be in need of financial support owing to her recent misfortunes. The Punjab which owes its prosperity in a large measure to the armed services, is also dependent for its finance and administration on the All-India budget. If the resources of Pakistan are compared with those of Hindustan we then begin to realise that the sponsors of this chimerical scheme have not a leg to stand on. Total Revenue of Pakistan will approximate from every source 61 crores of Rupees while Hindustan will realise 98 crores of Rupees. Even Dr. Ambedkar whom Nichols and Jinnah quote as an authority on this partition scheme cannot help concluding as quoted by V. B. Kulkarni in "Is Pakistan necessary" "Dr Ambedkar thinks that the revenues derived from the Hindu majority blocks in Pakistan must be deducted from the total revenue of Rs. 60 crores,

as he does not propose to allow the League to annex these areas. The result will be to quote his own words. 'To put it into concrete terms while the revenues of Pakistan and the Eastern Muslim State will be Rs. 60 crores minus 24 crores i. e. 36 crores the revenues of Hindustan will be 96 crores plus 24 crores i.e. 120' (Thoughts on Pakistan P 65). Yet the learned Doctor is not troubled over the financial position of Pakistan which he so enthusiastically supports".

How this partition will affect the defence of the country is another problem to be solved. The invasions will invariably come through the North as history has proved repeatedly and if there are two separate independent zones without any central authority to direct a joint defence policy, Pakistan will prove to be the weakest link to resist aggression from any side by any power. Even Professor Coupland an authority on the subject of India felt constrained to admit that Defence was a very big obstacle for the champions of Pakistan to overcome,

If Pakistan has so many drawbacks and is impracticable, why does Jinnah persist in pushing it on to the Indian political stage, is a question that the reader may well ask? The answer is simple. The Pakistan stunt is a good bargaining counter with which Jinnah hopes to achieve a fifty-fifty share in the seats both Provincial and Central of the Legislatures, Executive, Judiciary, equal shares in the army, public and national bodies for this community of 92 million Muslims against 310

million non-Muslims.

In Bombay Nov: 8th '45 Jinnah in an interview with the Associated Press of America defined the nebulous theory of Pakistan which is reproduced below, "Mr. Jinnah emphasised and re-emphasised that he spoke for himself, as a citizen and as President of the League. But the directing genius of the forces of Pakistan did not intend to try to dictate to the constitution drafting legislative bodies of Pakistan, and did not want to create an impression that he was trying to do so now. Some of the highlights of his statements on the various phases of the Pakistan controversy may be summed up as follows."

"Geographically Pakistan would embrace all of the North-Western Frontier, Baluchistan, Sind and the Punjab Province in North Western India. On the Eastern side of India would be the other portion of Pakistan composed of Assam and Bengal.

"Politically Pakistan would be a democracy Mr. Jinnah said, he hoped its major industrial and public utility services would be socialised. The component states or provinces of Pakistan would have autonomy."

"Economically Mr. Jinnah continued, Pakistan divided into two separate zones was just as sound an undertaking as if it were a country with all of its states in one block, that its natural resources and population would be sufficient to make it a great world power."

“Declaring that Pakistan would embrace a population of some one hundred million persons Mr. Jinnah added “England became a power with only a population of thirty five million. Pakistan would become one of the most powerful states economically.”

“He said that even now a Muslim League Committee is studying the field for developing Pakistan as a nation. There is a great future for it, with its still untouched iron, petroleum sulphur, coal and other mineral deposits, many of which already have been mapped. The Punjab is putting up one of the greatest hydro-electric stations in the world, and this will mean a rural electrification and industrial development programme.”

“He said there would be ample revenues from ‘equitable taxation levied in a manner consistent with social justice,’ to finance good government and ‘allow us to have a state as good as any in the world and better than many sovereign countries on the map of the world today”

“This would be a Muslim State” Mr. Jinnah said “As far as the Mussalman is concerned there would be no social barriers of any kind against Hindus or anyone else. The Mussalmans are a people who believe in, and act on the basic principle of equality” .....A. P. of America.

To this vague definition we cannot help but ask Mr. Jinnah to reply in definite terms, to a

questionnaire put in The Sind Observer by a contributor. "Questions to Qaid-e-Azam (Jinnah's title).

"Will Mr. Jinnah please answer?"

"Well known for his jugglery with words Mr. Jinnah in his latest statement tells us that he is not fighting the Hindus, but that the struggle for Pakistan means freedom for both Hindus and Muslims. Even if it were so, millions throughout India have grave doubts and misgivings regarding the Muslim League Leaders plans and professions. Will Mr. Jinnah therefore on the eve of his victory celebrations please answer the following.

(1) "What are the territories of Pakistan and the percentages of Muslims and non-Muslims in each of the territories claimed?"

(2) "Muslims as a backward community have been demanding (and getting) preferential rights and treatment. Will such preferences be conceded and given to Hindus, Sikhs, Budhists Christians and Harijans in Pakistan?"

(3) "Is the demand for Pakistan to seek political justice, equal economic opportunity and better education, or is it a desire to dominate non-Muslims in Pakistan?"

(4) "Will Pakistan have Islam as a state

religion? Or will it be a secular state? If the state will have Islam as its official religion, how do you guarantee freedom of religion to non-Muslims? The past history refutes any claims to such a guarantee?"

(5) "Will Pakistan government directly or indirectly encourage conversion of non-Muslim to Islam or vice versa? If through reconversion the Muslim population becomes a minority where will then Pakistan be?"

(6) "Will non-Muslims have the right to claim self-determination in Pakistan territories as you claim for Muslims in India?"

(7) "Is Pakistan to be created by the will of all the people in each of the territories claimed or only by the will of the Muslims living in each territory, or by the will of all Muslims living all over India?"

(8) "If Muslims outside the claimed territories have no voice in creating Pakistan how is their opinion and clamour for it relevant to the issue?"

(9) "What system of government do you propose for Pakistan? If democracy, define it as you propose to establish it?"

(10) "Will you permit political parties to be formed among Muslims and non-Muslims without any government interference?"

(11) "Will there be adult (including women) franchise and joint electorates?"

(12) "Will the minorities have the status of statutory minorities? and how do you propose to protect them?"

(13) "What would be Pakistan's relations with the adjoining Muslim states? Would you work for a pan-Islamic or pan-Arabic or pan-Iranian state?"

(14) "If a foreign Muslim state invaded Pakistan would you accept their rule? Would you fight them?"

(15) "What would be your attitude to Muslim minorities in Pakistan eg: Ahrars, Shias, Momins etc?"

(16) "What is Muslim culture? Is there such a thing as Indian Muslim culture? Which of the two you consider is in danger?"

(17) "Why do you advocate Urdu as the language of the Indian Muslims?"

(18) "What percentage of Indian Muslims know, speak, read and write the high flown Lucknow Urdu? Please give figures province-wise?"

(19) "Why not adopt Arabic as the language of the Indian Muslims, if you consider Islam in India must have its own language?"

(20) "Why have you chosen the Provinces you claim? Do they give you homogeneity? Do you think that the average 45 percent non-Muslim minority will make Pakistan safe?"

(21a) "If the 8 percent Muslims in Hindustan will not have the treatment the 45 percent non-

Muslim would claim in Pakistan, what would you do to ensure reciprocity?"

(b) "In order to achieve homogeneity would you agree to withdraw all Muslims from Hindustan and force all non-Muslims to leave Pakistan?"  
 "(One Nation Walla)".

A reproduction of Mr. Asaf Ali's invitation to the Muslim League to "Let The World Know What Pakistan Constitution Is" is well worth studying. "New Delhi Oct: 2nd 1945" "A nation is always a political entity and not a religious one. Hindus and Muslims are definitely two communities but certainly not two nations" declared Mr. Asaf Ali, member Congress Working Committee and Convener of the Defence Committee I. N. A. soldiers, while replying to a question of a representative of the press on what he thought of the two-nation theory."

"It is a pure delusion" proceeded Mr. Asaf Ali "to talk of Hindus and Muslims residing within geographical frontiers of India as two nations. I can understand a general term like 'Hindee' or 'Hindustani' being applied to Hindus, Muslims, and others living in this country. I can also understand religious communities as Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and others who live in this country. The Muslim community consists of Africans, Iranians, the Turkish and in fact all Muslims living anywhere in the world? So is the Christian community made up of Christians all over the planet."

"It is only the oneness of economic



tical needs and interests of different communities living in a particular country that makes up a nation. I do not see any justification for dividing a common country of Hindus, Muslims and others along the lines of religious cleavages. Such a division will not only complicate, but not solve the vital problems of the country".

"The defence policy of a country is determined by its neighbours. If the neighbours are powerful, immense defensive forces will have to be maintained. Consequently the proposed Pakistan will have to *organise and maintain immense defence forces both in the North West and North East unless the defence of Pakistan is to be the responsibility of the whole of Hindustan or some other great power, say the British. But in the second case the kind of freedom which the sponsors of Pakistan contemplate will not merely become problematical but will also be a source of inescapable weakness. Finances necessary to maintain a huge force in the widely separated parts of Pakistan will run into astronomical figures, and I fail to see where all this money will come from. On the other hand, these two areas being fully autonomous may enter into common federation for the purposes of common defence and all India services and other common interests.*"

"Mr: Asaf Ali suggested to the advocates of Pakistan to come to grips with the details and let the world know what the constitution of the proposed states would be. "The 1940 resolution of the League, which foreshadows the vague grouping of contiguous areas definitely authorised the Working Com-

mittee of the All India Muslim League to produce a draft constitution which has not been forthcoming up to this day. Had it been done the controversy would have proceeded on realistic lines. The voters would have been able to judge whether the Provinces remaining outside the federated India could ever improve the lot of those who have been allowed to nurse this illusion."

"He emphasised that the freedom could never be won by resolutions, debates and controversies but always by sacrifices. "Had those" he added "who have been passing resolutions and holding debates, associated themselves with the struggle for freedom they would have achieved their real purpose long ago."

"Referring to the belief in certain quarters that Pakistan will be protected by some outside power preferably the British, till it was strong enough to protect itself, Mr: Asaf Ali remarked 'Then it will not be a free sovereign state, but another Indian state added to the 600 already existing.'"

Another viewpoint of Pakistan on its economic implications is of more interest "Calcutta Sept: 20th 1945 (A.P.I.)" the view that Pakistan is not a practicable proposition either economically or financially, is expressed by Mr: N.R. Sarker formerly commerce member of the Government of India, who was a member of the sub-committee of the Sapru Committee on the economic and financial aspects of Pakistan."

"Mr. Sarker states this in a note on the memorandum of Sir Homi Modi and Mr. John Matthai the two other members of the sub-committee."

"Mr. Sarker considers that the views expressed by his colleagues that the separation would appear to be workable on economic grounds judged solely by the test of ability (a) to maintain existing standards of living and (b) to meet budgetary requirements on a prewar basis, but excluding provision for defence does not appear to constitute approach from a proper angle. For one thing there is no reason why we should exclude defence expenditure which is a vital factor. If the defence expenditure were included Pakistan would be an *unsound proposition from the point of view of the budget.*"

"For another the first test, namely the maintenance of existing standards of living, is hardly sufficient. To say that under Pakistan the present low standards of living would be maintained should constitute not an economic justification but just the reverse says Mr. Sarker. If, in addition the considerations of economic development with a view to improving the standard of living of the people were taken into account, the economic arguments against Pakistan would appear to be overwhelming."

"Mr. Sarker believes that the division of India into two separate states will be highly prejudicial particularly to Pakistan areas and specially if they are constituted district-wise. It is no exag-

geration to say that if India were divided on the basis of religion the Hindu area would have almost a monopoly of the mineral wealth. Consequently Pakistan would be placed at a great disadvantage in respect to industrial development. It is true that Pakistan would have substantial water power. But it is doubtful if a country is able to grow into a strong self-reliant economy by virtue of water power alone while poverty in respect of other essential economic resources is so pronounced."

"Economically a divided India would be condemned to a standard of living which may even be lower than what it is today, says Mr. Sarker. Also a completely independent state in the North East or in Bengal would be incapable of defence against powerful invasion and render the rest of India equally defenceless. A single government for India is thus rooted in the sheer necessity of economic existence. Mere defence requirements Mr. Sarker thinks will outstrip the resources of Pakistan and the matter of financing the other heads of expenditure will be out of question. He adds that the estimate of the budgetary position of Pakistan in the memorandum is not strictly accurate. If Pakistan were to be constituted districtwise expenditure will have to be incurred on many items which do not appear to have been considered in the memorandum.

Another authoritative view on this preposterous claim comes from the pen of a correspondent of the Civil and Military Gazette as late as March 3rd 1946.

Apart from going over the same grounds of Jinnah's lack of moral justification in his Pakistan claim he gives us the view that "It is doubtful whether the Muslim League claim for Pakistan including geographically contiguous areas of Sind the North West Frontier Province, Baluchistan and the Punjab on the North Western Frontier and Bengal and Assam on the Eastern border can in the face in the election results be morally sustained. The North West Frontier Province and Assam as the verdict of voters indicate are definitely opposed to Pakistan."

"Besides the securing of all Muslim seats in the provincial legislatures by the League does not entitle it to claim the whole of the Punjab or Sind Provinces as at present constituted. The League's claim to have Pakistan applies only to those districts in Sind, the Punjab and Bengal which are predominantly populated by Muslims. To this there can be no opposition if it is conceded that by virtue of only religion the Muslims of India form a separate nation".

"The question which will baffle the League more than other parties is whether the number of districts with predominantly Muslim population can form a sizeable state to be economically self-sufficient and able to defend itself against foreign aggression and maintain internal order."

"Division of India will also mean division of assets and liabilities in proportion to the number of people in the two different groups. To a unit going out of India little choice will be given in

financial matters and therefore the liquidation of all liabilities apportioned to it may be too formidable a burden to bear."

"Pakistan will have to shoulder two kinds of liabilities. First it must pay to acquire ownership of such existing assets as Railways, particularly the whole of the North Western Railway and the East Indian and other railways, and other centrally administered departments like Posts and Telegraphs, Income Tax, Salt, Currency, Customs, and the cost of the all-India services. To these will be added a good share of India's war debt."

"Pakistan on its asset side will be entitled to sterling balances, but only to a limited share equal to the number of people residing in the area; In other words the financial obligations are of such stupendous magnitude, running into hundreds of crores of rupees that before Pakistan is able to administer itself, it will be burdened with unbearable debts. Revenue resources within its own territory are meagre. There is no tax on agricultural produce and there are few industries. On the other hand the Punjab whose soldiers by way of salaries and pensions derive a large income from the Government of India will be deprived of it. It is not likely that Hindustan will agree to write off all the liabilities which will accrue to Pakistan when it claims to be a separate political entity."

Since we have dealt with the technical aspect of this Utopia let us turn to the other aspects

which also have a direct bearing on the strength of the claim. A press notice dated Feb: 16th 1946 on the N.W. Frontier Assembly elections states "the Province has given a verdict in the present elections" says Hakim Abdul Jalil Nadvi President of the Peshawar Congress Committee in a statement to the press. He added "It is not only the rural frontier but the urban frontier also which is against the Muslim League. Even in Peshawar City which is considered the stronghold of the Muslim League about 16000 votes were secured collectively by two Muslim League candidates and about 22,000 votes were cast against the Muslim League. It requires no further proof that Peshawar Muslims are also with the Frontier Muslims and do not like the Muslim League."

Another contributor in an article called Current Coin in the Daily Gazette writes "The Muslim League demand for Pakistan has been analysed from different points of view during recent months. Economically and Financially Pakistan has been proved to be impractical, but it was however left to a Muslim divine to examine it and show how it violates the Islamic ideal. Asked about his views on Mr. Jinnah's 'two nation' theory Moulana Habibul Rahman a well known Ahrar leader said in a press interview "Islam which is a world religion cannot be bound up to a particular nationality. Nor could it be circumscribed into a state, Islam seeks to develop all nationalities and countries. To bind it down to a particular area or a set of people is against the spirit and teachings of Islam." Justifying this observation the Moulana

cited an instance from early Islamic history of Abu Bakar the first Caliph and Abdul Jalil one of the greatest opponents of Islam. "Although both were of the same nationality and tribe (Querishis) they were opponents in religion. It was clear therefore" added Moulana Habibul Rahman "that religion could not determine the nationality" and yet the League raises the bogey of "Islam in Danger" whenever it presses its demands for Pakistan".

"Associated Press of India report dated Simla July 2nd, "Mr. Khalil-ul-Rehman Secretary Bengal Provincial Momin Ansar Conference has sent the following telegram to Moulana Abul Kalam Azad. 'Five crores of Momins do not subscribe to the Muslim League's policy, Mr: Jinnah cannot speak for them, the Momin community claims representation in the Interim Government" Later on Sept:26th at Allahabad the same community held that "There can only be one meaning of Pakistan in India, that is to strengthen foreign rule. We cannot tolerate this, and this is our fundamental difference with the League". They asserted that recently the conference of different groups of nationalist Muslims held at Delhi had decided to falsify the Muslim League claim to represent all Muslims in its fold in India. They said the Nationalist Muslims were busy organising themselves to fight the forth-coming elections."

Another Associated Press of India report of July 2nd Simla mentions that Moulana Abul Kalam Azad the Congress President has received



a telegram from Mr: Shamsuddin Ahmed President, Nikhil Banga Krishak Proja Samiti and leader of the Krishak Proja Parliamentary Party, saying "Mr: Jinnah's claim to speak as the sole representative of the Muslims in India and as President of the Muslim League is fantastic defeated and discredited". Mr: Shamsuddin adds "The Congress will forfeit it's claim to represent itself as the only national political institution, if it fails to speak on behalf of the Nationalist Muslims of India."

In Poona on the 25th Dec: 1945 "a resolution stating that the Shias could not support the Muslim League demand for Pakistan was adopted today at the meeting of the Council of Action of the All Parties SHIA conference, Mr: Husseinbhoy Laljee presiding."

"The Council decided to work for the independence of India shoulder to shoulder with other organisations. The Council feared that the establishment of Pakistan would ostensibly result in the establishment of the Hanafi Shariat in that area. a Shariat, which was fundamentally different from the Shariat Jaffri' or Imamia Law which was followed by the Shias."

"The Lahore resolution of the Muslim League wherein it was stated that provision would be made in the constitution for adequate and effective protection of the religious, cultural, economic and political rights of the minorities, did not make clear whether the Shia community would be recog-

nised as a minority in the constitution. On the contrary the attitude of the Muslim League High command refusing to recognise the Shias as a separate important Muslim minority to be governed by its own Sharia, made the Shias sceptical of the demand of the Muslim League for Pakistan, and the council thought that it was not possible for the Shias to support the Muslim League demand."

"After referring to its fruitless efforts to come to an agreement with the Muslim League the Council authorised its President to approach other political organisations to secure their co-operation for the recognition of the rights of the Shias as a distinct and important minority in the future constitution of India. The Council called upon the Shias to abstain from exercising their right of franchise in the forth-coming elections as a protest against Shias not getting adequate representation in the legislatures, political, and civil bodies in proportion to their political importance and numerical strength of three crores, and the indifference shown by the Muslim League towards their demands."

A prominent Muslim Allama Mashriqui, Leader of the Khaksars exposed League pretensions in the course of his speech (in Bombay on Nov: 9th 1945) "severely criticised the policy and programme of the Muslim League which he said was a body of Nawabs and misguided men, who have conspired with the British Government to fight the Congress. He declared that the Muslim League was a body of a few selfish people who could never

claim to represent 'a hundred million Mussulmans of India.'

If the Ahrars, Mominis, Shias, Majlis and Azad Muslims do not support Jinnah's Pakistan how does Nichols manage to assert that "Jinnah's 100 million Muslims will march to the left, to the right, to the front, to the rear at his bidding and at nobody else's" (Verdict on India P: 188)? In all probability he must have been in a prolonged trance when assimilating his facts on Jinnah's Utopia or his mathematical acumen must be on par with the high standard of the British propaganda department.

Other communities also exhibit the same determination in refusing to accept such a chimerical scheme. At Lahore on Sept: 30th 1945 "at the central Akali Dal conference the Sikhs passed a resolution to co-operate with the Congress, provided the latter undertook to undauntedly support the Akhand Hindustan and refused to accept Pakistan at any cost."

Recently in London the Secretary of the Muslim League condemned Jinnah's outlook on Feb: 4th, Reuter reports "The man most qualified to lead India in her fight for independence is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, says Mr. Sayed Abdul Majid Quraishy, General Secretary of the London Branch of All-India Muslim League in his letter of resignation to the President Mr. Mohammad Abbas Ali."

"Mr. Quraishy is leaving the League to join the pro-Congress India League, because he says the Muslim League is not representative of Mussulmans. 'I can no longer associate myself with your organisation in view of its suicidal and uncompromising attitude towards our great Indian independence movement, under the able leadership of that great socialist Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,' says Quraishy in his letter."

"I have lost faith in the leadership of Mr. Jinnah and Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan because they failed to accept Pandit Nehru's offer of 95 per cent Pakistan. At this crucial moment in India's history all anti-imperialist forces in India should join hands to achieve independence."

Independent authoritative foreign comment is contained in Mr. Phillip's (President Roosevelt's Personal Envoy) report New Delhi Jan 7th. "That in the long run the vast majority of Muslims will join with the peasants and workers of all religions, and the Hindu - Muslim problem as it appears today will no longer exist, is the prophecy made by Mr. William Phillips one time President Roosevelt's Personal envoy in India, in the report he submitted to the U. S. Government after his return from India. The report has so far been kept a secret".

domination."

"Referring to the Muslim League's demand the report says "The Muslim leaders have not proved that Muslim interests as such were endangered by Congress rule. What does appear evident from a survey of the years of provincial autonomy is that the Muslim League as a political party will not have an opportunity to gain control of the government, but will continue to occupy, except in a few provinces the position of a minority in the Assemblies and in the Central Legislature, also it cannot hope to capture a majority of the seats. This is the real grievance of the Muslim League. It explains the concern of Mr. Jinnah and other Muslim leaders over the Congress attitude towards the states. It explains the demand of Pakistan." The report adds "The Muslim objection to self government for India on the ground that the Congress will continue to dominate political affairs is no longer valid".

"Furthermore there is every reason to suppose that the Muslim League itself will be affected by changes in other political organisations. In the first place the Muslim community as a political party has only an artificial unity. Like other religious groups it comprises various classes which have been more or less welded together politically by the device of separate electorate. There is already evidence to indicate that the Muslim workers and peasants are becoming increasingly aware of their unity with the Hindus of the same class. The Muslims are beginning to realise that

religion does not obliterate class distinction or produce a community of interest”.

Again “Mr. Jinnah’s accusation that the sole aim of the Congress is to annihilate every other organisation in the country is his interpretation of the fact, that the Congress continued to pursue a policy of expansion by endeavouring to win adherents from all elements to the Indian population. Complete success in this would have resulted in the dissolution of the Muslim League and other communal and sectional organisations.”

“But the purpose of the Congress was not to set itself up as a Fascist government, but to unify India in order to gain the objective independence and the right of Indians to frame their own constitution. The fact remains that the entire policy of the Congress during the years the Congress ministers were in power was centred round the effort to hold the organisation together, and to increase its strength in order to secure independence for India”.

“It must be noted that the sweeping allegations contained in Mr. Jinnah’s “Deliverance Day Resolution” continuing the report says “are not supported by the evidence accumulated and presented by various Muslim League Reports, even if these were validated. The charge that the Congress governments did their best to destroy Muslim culture rests principally upon a few isolated instances of the elimination of Urdu from schools curriculum, and such measures as the

Wardha Scheme of basic education, or the use of certain text books. The case of economic or political discrimination is even weaker."

The report added, "that communal disturbances assumed alarming proportions during the years of the Congress ministries is also not based on facts. In fact the Hindu-Muslim riots were frequent in Bengal and the Punjab during the same period, and were more numerous in the Punjab than in any one Congress province. An unbiased judgment would consider the disturbances an outcome of growing cleavage between the Muslims and Hindus which owed its development quite as much to the communal spirit emphasised by the Muslim League as to any other single factor." (Daily Gazette).

Another press report from Washington March 6th 1946 "It is utterly inconceivable that there can be a successful Muslim movement" Mr. Emanuel Celler (Democrat) declared in a letter sent to Pandit Nehru yesterday".

"Mr. Celler added 'The economic and political problems involved would be insurmountable and eventually any enthusiasm for Pakistan would evaporate'".

"Mr. Celler who headed the successful fight to get the Lower Chamber of Congress to pass the Indian Immigration Bill told Pandit Nehru 'We Liberals in the United States confidently hope that your party will receive an overwhelming popular mandate as the chosen instrument to

deliver India from British misrule. We are as disturbed as you that Muslims desire an independent Pakistan' Mr. Celler expressed the hope that differences would disappear once independence was achieved" (Reuter).

'De Valera opposes Pakistan' so heads a press report from Bombay dated 2nd. "According to the London correspondent of the Bombay Chronicle in a letter to Mr. Subrata Row Choudhry, President of the Cambridge University Indian Majlis, President De Valera has expressed the earnest hope that Indians would learn a serious lesson from Ulster and do everything to preserve the unity of India. Mr. De Valera concludes 'Do not vivisect India. Avert the tragedy which will only help the enemies of India'".

We have subjected this nebulous idea to every exhaustive test ranging from economy and moral rights down to political opinion both in the country (from all sections) and abroad, and find that also on account of the recent elections the vision of a solid Muslim sovereign state covering the upper part of India has completely vanished. Eight Congress provinces with a definite coalition in the Punjab to be followed with the possibility of one in Sind has been the death knell of such nebulous theories of 1940-1944, even though there might be a plebiscite of districts. What Nehru meant by 95 percent Pakistan was that the predominantly Muslim districts could secede and form their own state, as the Hindus, Sikhs and



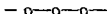
other communities could not be dragged into Pakistan unwillingly. But this concession appears to Jinnah as a 'Dead Pakistan' and a 'lifeless skeleton' and not a 'Live Pakistan'. So now we have two distinct definitions of Pakistan which unfortunately Nichols did not elicit from his hero 'Mr. Jinnah' namely the Pakistan of the 'dead,' and the 'living'.

It would be fitting to end this autopsy with a reproduction of a part of an editorial in the "Sind Observer" dated March 20th 1946. "Nor can the Muslim League force unwilling parties like the Sikhs and Hindus to come into it, to make it by their efforts a live and not a dead thing."

"It is thus a vanished vision, for with the Frontier Province excluded Pakistan is not a possible strategic unit, and so is it in the East with Assam excluded. 'History and Geography have willed' says Mr. Brailsford 'that Muslims should live in peace with their Hindu neighbours. Even if they get Pakistan, thirty millions of them will be left outside it's borders, and therefore, as the British Government is in earnest to transfer power Mr. Jinnah himself must come down from his high horse'".

We would recommend that before advocating any partitioning scheme Mr. Nichols devotes himself to a more diligent study of world history, to realise that if such schemes were practical they would have been employed in Russia, America,

and Canada to name only a few. It is fairly evident that this side of his education has been almost neglected.



## CHAPTER XV.

## Mr. Nichol's Jinnah.

Nichols interview with Jinnah brings many points to the intelligent reader's notice which need a more satisfactory explanation. If as Nichols quotes in this meeting that Jinnah gave him to understand, that by claiming Pakistan he was thinking in terms of life, of Muslim history, their heroes, art, architecture, music, laws, and jurisprudence and to set down in his own words "In all these things our outlook is not only fundamentally different but often radically antagonistic to the Hindus. We are different beings. There is nothing in life which links us together. Our names, our clothes, our foods ..... they are all different. our economic life, our educational ideas, our treatment of women, our attitude to animals. We challenge each other at every point of the compass." We begin to wonder how the poor Muslim martyrs managed to bear it for all these centuries, till the arrival of Mr: M.A. Jinnah on the political scene, and the Fleet Street 'Messiah' Beverley Nichols?

Muslims and Hindus are co-sharers" states Professor Abdul Majid Khan of Lahore commenting on Mr. Jinnah's interview appearing in the News Chronicle London, in which he was reported to have said that he was *not* an Indian.

Professor Majid says "It is mischievous and misleading for anyone to say that we (Hindus and Muslims) are not only different and distinct but antagonistic" He says that impartial historians have maintained that settlers in India from adjoining Muslim countries for centuries have blended what is the noblest and best in both Hindu and Muslim cultures."

"To art and architecture, literature and language, metaphysics and music, history and philosophy, the land revenue as well as the administrative system of India, the Muslims have been contributing for the last ten centuries their share of co-ordinated and synthetic culture which now occupies an exalted place in the world."

"Simply by the creation of artificial independent states it is impossible to withdraw either the Hindu or Muslim culture into segregated non-associating areas."

"Professor Majid adds that the interests of Muslim peasants are essentially the same as those of the Hindu tillers of the soil. The problems of Hindu and Muslim labourers are identical. The real conflict is between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. Distribution of political and economic

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Yet another prominent Muslim Professor Majid criticising Jinnah (for declaring that he was not an Indian) stated at a press interview with a representative of the Associated Press of India on April 2nd "It is atrocious for any son of the sacred soil of this country to say that he is not an Indian, as the whole of India is our motherland and in every walk of life, and in every sphere of activity the

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rights can never be based on religious or theological differences he concludes".

Another aspect of this Utopia is brought into prominence with the question put by Nichols to Mr. Jinnah and his reply. (Von I) "Self: Are the Muslims likely to be richer or poorer under Pakistan? and would you set up tariffs against the rest of India?"

"Jinnah: 'I'll ask you a question for a change. Supposing you were asked which you would prefer ..... A rich England under Germany or a poor England free, what would your answer be?'" To which bright question Nichols could only mutter "It's hardly necessary to say". One cannot help reflecting that this genius of the West who became an authority on India with 'only a year's intensive study' could not even see the irrelevancy of the question, and was utterly incapable of framing a fitting reply. There is no question of an analogy of the type given by Jinnah. India has never been *free*. She has been under the domination of invaders from the early times. But apart from this, we have the irrefutable fact that India has the lowest standard of living in the world, and if Pakistan will only result in lowering that standard for the Muslims then it is not worth while attaining. The rank and file of the Muslim community lead an almost hand to mouth existence and so far as they are concerned the present arrangement or the 'status quo' still holds good. If they had the slightest inkling that they will have to make further sacrifices and that

Pakistan will not be a land of milk and honey, they would not be in such a hurry to shout "Pakistan Zindabad". It is all very well for the leaders to say that they would rather live in poverty and enjoy freedom, than enjoy luxuries whilst losing their independence, but one has only to live in India for a month, leave alone Nichols' 'year,' to see how empty this declaration is, and that while the masses of Pakistan exist on bare necessities they would still continue to live as extravagantly as they do under the British Raj. They probably intend feeding their community with fresh air and League slogans.

The main task ahead of the Muslim leaders in general, and Jinnah in particular, is the welfare of the masses. They should raise the standard all-round by service to India as a whole, than to satisfy their 'ego' by creating a Pakistan at the expense of their community. In short Jinnah and his ilk would rather lord it over the confines of Pakistan than serve in Hindustan. In the Muslim League Jinnah stands well above his contemporaries. The only men who offered some sort of competition instead of being 'yes-men' were Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq. Sir Sikandar is dead and Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq had to leave the League as it was not a big enough organisation to have two fire-brands at the same time. So with hardly any competitor to cast any rival shadow over the political brilliance of this permanent President of the League styled the Qaid-e-Azam, it is hardly a matter for surprise to see him trying to preserve his precarious hold on Indian



politics to justify his position in the League, and the League itself as a counterpoise to the Congress. For if he were to become a realist for once and step down off his high horse and share in the common fight for independence his personal position in the political field would be almost lost in competition with such stalwarts like Jawaharlal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachariar, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Bhulabhai Desai, Sarat Bose, Mahatma Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Pant and a host of others.

If one were to accept the arguments of Jinnah on the difference of culture of the Hindus and Muslims and concede that government of such a mixed population could not function amicably, except through secession and the ultimate creation of Pakistan, might we also allow ourselves the liberty of drawing an analogy from the West and inquire of Jinnah as to how the apparently successful administration of U. S. S. R. and the United States has been achieved without introducing Pakistan of a western pattern?

Again if the Hindu mode of living offered a challenge to him at every point of the compass why then did he take advantage of the utility of an organisation such as the Congress, which has a predominance of Hindu membership? To give a fuller picture of his earlier history let us quote Kailash Chandra in "The Tragedy of Jinnah" "Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, an able and young lawyer of Bombay was making himself felt in the public of those days. He was a man of great energy and

keen opportunism. He found the Congress taking long strides on the road to power and popularity. He joined it and soon found a prominent place in it. In those days not much sacrifice was needed to reach the top. There were no 'Satyagraha' 'non-co-operation' 'and going to jail' ladders on which one had to climb to reach the top. A debating skill and some interest in the public life were needed and Mr. M. A. Jinnah had them in ample measure, so Mr. Jinnah became associated with the Congress from the very start of his public career. The Muslim League being a narrow and rather unpopular organisation Mr. Jinnah had kept aloof from it under the cloak of nationalism. But with a new orientation in its policy and programme, chances of the Muslim League becoming a popular organisation became brighter, Mr. M. A. Jinnah became a member of the Muslim League in England at the suggestion of Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Sayed Wazir Hasan President and Secretary of the League. From this day Mr. Jinnah began to keep his one leg in the boat of the Muslim League and the other in the boat of the Congress. But still Jinnah was a 'pucca' nationalist and expressly laid a condition to his joining the Muslim League, that he would desert the League if his loyalty to it came in conflict with his loyalty either to the Congress or to larger interests of India. He was chosen a member of the Congress Deputation to England in May 1914 concerning the proposed reforms of the India Council. The Congress by appointing him a member of this Deputation gave him the biggest push in public life. And Mr. Jinnah availed him-

self of it in the fullest measure. Accounts of this visit to England look like a personal popularity campaign."

Before proceeding further with our arguments against Nichols' giant let us cover a little factual background to explain Professor Majid's declaration that the conflict between the Hindus and Muslims was in reality one of the 'Haves' versus the 'Have-nots'. In India even the most casual observer cannot help but notice the vast difference in the character and disposition of the peoples who inhabit this sub-continent. The Muslim masses are predisposed to liberality in the economic side of life. 95 percent of the community live above their means and are invariably in debt. They have no care for the morrow and blandly explain away their own self-inflicted misfortunes through the famous saying 'Kismet'. Frequently the children have to carry the responsibility of the family debts. The Hindu on the hand is thrifty. Well over 80 percent are in a solvent position and though they cry poverty have sufficient savings to tide them over the rough passages of life. They make it a habit to save even on the smallest wage, resorting sometimes to one meal a day in order to put by something. This is one reason why one sees so many Hindus successfully engaged in business because of their practical attitude in life, and pushing characteristics to keep abreast of the times.

The friction really boils down to the Hindu doctrine of Untouchability. According to the

Hindu custom they refrain from dealing with other communities for fear of social contamination. This mania is most noticeable among the lower classes and the last three castes of the Hindu Social structure. Hence to preserve their caste restrictions the Hindu will always purchase any commodity from a Hindu shop rather than from a Muslim-owned one regardless of the distance or inconvenience involved. The Muslim on the other hand will patronise either according to his whims, and as there is a preponderance of Hindu-owned shops compared to Muslims, with a greater variety and dependable service the money from Muslim pockets is gradually going into Hindu hands. This has now come to a point in which the Muslim feels he is being crowded out. But even so it does not constitute a case for Pakistan. What is really needed is a revolutionary change of outlook in the Muslim as regards finance and to encourage him to play the same game as the Parsi who though he belongs to a microscopic minority has made himself potent enough to be felt in every walk of life connected with India,

Jinnah has shown a form of timidity whenever the party he is associated with has trodden on dangerous grounds. Leading politicians of both the Congress and Muslim League parties such as Mahatma Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahommed Ali and Shaukat Ali have spent considerable time in the Indian prisons as a personal sacrifice in the cause of their country's independence, but it is not so with the honourable Mr. Jinnah. It does indeed

raise a laugh to hear him talk of suffering and sacrifice when he has sedulously avoided courting trouble with the authorities, or being looked upon with disfavour by his saviours the British. That this attitude or characteristic of his has not passed unnoticed is recorded by Kailash Chandra in "Tragedy of Jinnah." "Those political leaders who only wanted to talk, and do nothing were pushed aside like dust. Conspicuous by his absence from first class politics was Mr: Mohammed Ali Jinnah the Bombay Lawyer. So long as it was safe to remain in the Congress, the Muslim League and the Home Rule League and maintain political leadership by just uttering a few well chosen words at this meeting or that, Mr: Jinnah was in the vanguard. But when all the three organisations began to tread on dangerous grounds and their possibility of coming into conflict with the Government became imminent Mr: Jinnah deserted them or as some say 'was left out'. Mr: Jinnah could do the talking and keep the leadership so long as it did not bring him into direct conflict with the authorities. He could do anything but suffer at the hands of the Government. This type of timidity is shown by many a public man in India who of course hides it under the cloak of what he calls his' adherence to constitutionalism"

For quite a long time we were given to understand from authoritative sources that the Indian Muslims were an important minority in India. In 1940 Jinnah suddenly discovered that this minority was not a minority at all but a distinct nation. On the 1st of April 1946 (if it is not a traditional

joke and as it is evidently not meant to be) The Muslims if they followed the lead given by Jinnah have now discovered that they are *not* Indians. As reported on the above date by the (U. P. I.) "I do not regard myself as an Indian" This statement was made by Mr: M. A. Jinnah President of the All-India Muslim League according to Norman Cliff Foreign Editor of the London 'News Chronicle' who interviewed the League President at Delhi, on the Cabinet mission's negotiations on the question of Pakistan. "News Chronicle has front paged Mr: Jinnah's interview with a double column headline "Moslems wont budge."

"Mr Jinnah replied to Cliff's question if his uncompromising attitude on Pakistan meant loyalty to his country before that of loyalty to his community. 'There is no country in that sense. I do not regard myself as an Indian. India is a state of nationalities including two major nations and all we claim is a distinct sovereign state for our nation' he said."

To another question that if the Congress were persuaded to offer him equal share would he accept? Mr. Jinnah said "No I do not want to live jointly with them. We are not only different and distinct but antagonistic. Why does Britain want to keep us together? We refuse and if you want to force us you will need to keep your bayonets."

(Von I)

To this prize bit of wisdom we can only wonder at the effrontery of the man in claiming parts of India on his own terms when he declared

that he is not an Indian. If he is not a son of the soil and finds life with the other communities unbearable then surely the 'Quit India' slogan applies equally to him and his henchmen who are guilty of the same folly as well as to the British. One more pertinent question must be put to this man who places such a high premium on being a Muslim, that if he considered living with other communities difficult because his culture was different, distinct, and antagonistic why did he elect to marry out of his community. Evidently this example of cultural discord in the field of matrimony has been so successful that his own daughter has followed in his footsteps by marrying outside the Muslim community. There are several hundred other Jinnahs who have gone in for mixed marriages. How will their unfortunate partners fare in the land of the 'Pure'?

If Jinnah claims that he and his community are not Indians and arrogates to himself the right of demanding portions of India as 'lebensraum', then the British can also use the same argument and insist on vivisectioning this country and choosing whatever portions they deem suitable for their future home-land or colonial expansion, because over 150 years in this country is a long enough period of probation for citizenship.

Let us quote another contradiction of this giant before delivering a smashing reply (P. 193. Von I.) "Jinnah: The one thing which keeps the British in India is the false idea of a United India as preached by Gandhi. A United India, I repeat

is a British creation a myth, and a very dangerous myth, which will cause endless strife. As long as that strife exists the British have an excuse for remaining. For once in a way 'divide and rule' does not apply."

To this *volte-face* statement and that of his declaration we have the following editorial in the Daily Gazette April 2nd. It's reproduction shows Jinnah up in a very poor light. "Mr. Jinnah's latest is a stunner. The talented leader of the Muslim League has repudiated his Indian nationality but not denied it. 'I do not regard myself as an Indian' says the Qaid-e-Azam. It might bewilder the average Indian reader, but not the Foreign Editor of the News Chronicle to whom this statement was made in India's capital. Mr. Noman Gliff must have scratched his head and asked himself. "What is this strange definition of a nation and nationality?" "

' "Mr. Jinnah need not be taken at his word. To be frightened by his latest would be to do him great injury. For Mr. Jinnah knows none better that religion or faith by itself cannot make for nationality or nationhood. If it could and did, the Parsis of India would be aliens on Indian soil. Mr. Jinnah knows that every follower of the Zoroastrian faith would repudiate and resent such a grotesque proposition. Indian Christians would then be entitled to call themselves a nation. Let Mr. Jinnah try the experiment with Sir Maharaj Singh and he will realise the limitations of his thunder and lightning. What about the Jains and



the Buddhists? Even Minto will turn in his grave and curse himself for that 'Command Performance' which ushered communal electorates."

"Were Mr. Jinnah to be taken at his word, General Smuts will be entitled to make a treaty with either of the two Indian 'nationalities' in South Africa to the detriment of the other. Before he meets the British delegation formally Mr. Jinnah ought to contact his one time admirer and follower Dr. Syed Hossain who is now here in India. He would then know what America thought of Mr. Jinnah's 'two nation' theory."

"Public memory it is true, is proverbially short. But it will not hesitate to contrast the latest interview with Jinnah's earlier utterances. Thus speaking on the Finance Bill in 1925 in the Legislative Assembly Mr. Jinnah said 'I never was a candidate and I am not a candidate for any post ..... I Sir, stand here with a clear conscience and I say that I am a nationalist first, a nationalist second, and a nationalist last. I once more appeal to this House whether you are a Mussalman or a Hindu, for God's sake do not import the discussion of communal matters into this House, and degrade this Assembly which we desire should become a real national parliament. Set an example to the outside world and our people.'"

"Maintaining that in Unity lies salvation Mr. Jinnah again speaking in the Legislative Assembly confessed that he learnt his first lesson in politics from Sir Surendra Nath Bannerjee. But let Mr.

Jinnah speak ”

“Sir I might say that I learnt my first lessons in politics at the feet of Sir Surendra Nath Bannerjee. I was associated with him as one of his followers and I looked up to him as a leader.’ Proceeding he observed ‘On this occasion I should like to say that these were the leaders in this country (Sir Surendra Nath Bannerjee and Mr. C R Das) for whom the Muhammadans had the greatest respect, and they commanded the confidence of the Mussalmans as much as any Mussalman leader. Sir the only lesson I feel that we might draw from the careers of these two great men is this, that in Unity lies salvation.”

“Addressing the Bombay Muslim Students Union in Feb: 1915 Mr. Jinnah emphasised firstly the value of discipline and secondly of self reliance. Then again he held before the students the ideal of co-operation unity and goodwill, not only among the different sections of Muslim students but between Muhammadan and other students. These last sentences of this speech are very important and have topical value, they are:-”

“There was one thing which must be realised by every thinking person as essential. If progress was to be made it would not be by discussions. Unity was absolutely Essential to Progress.”

“One more extract from his address to the Bombay Provincial Conference at Ahmedabad in Oct: 1916 may be cited. After pleading for unity and concerted action by the Hindus and Muham-

madans Mr. Jinnah ended with the following significant peroration."

"In conclusion let me tell you that after all a great deal depends upon ourselves. Hindus and Muhammadans united and firm, the voice of three hundred millions of people vibrating throughout the length and breadth of the country will produce a force which no power on earth can resist. India has, I believe, turned a corner. She has passed through great sufferings and borne them patiently for centuries. There is now a bright and great future in front of her. We are on a straight road, the promised land is in sight. 'Forward' is the motto and clear course for Young India. But in the onward march we must be circumspect and never lose sight of the true perspective before us. And wisdom and caution should be our watch-words."

"Again speaking at the Indian Round Table Conference on Nov: 12th 1930 Mr. Jinnah said "Now Sir let us understand the position in India. The position in India is this, and let me tell you without mincing any words that there is no section whether they are Hindus or Muhammadans, or whether they are Sikhs or Christians or Parsis or Depressed classes or even commercial classes, merchants or traders, there is not one section in India that has not emphatically declared that India must have a full measure of self-government."

In the same speech Mr. Jinnah further said: "It is a business proposition, and if the power of..

the Government is transferred to a Cabinet responsible to the Legislature, the first and foremost thing that we have to provide is that the various interests are safe-guarded and you cannot possibly frame any constitution unless you have provided safeguards for the rights and interests which exist in India. First there is the minority question which we shall have to tackle and unless you create that sense of security among the minorities which will secure a willing co-operation and allegiance to the State, no constitution that you may frame will work successfully."

"Let there be no mistake about it. Mr. Jinnah's present interview is nothing more than a bold attempt to hold the centre of the stage once again and maintain a bargaining counter without a compromise formula of his own. He must be knowing that the delegation could not accept the stand now asserted by him except in the light of the Rajaji formula. Then why does Jinnah play for high stakes? Is he a fool? What ever else he might be, he most certainly is not a fool. He is an astute lawyer and a shrewd politician. He wants a compromise formula to emanate from the Congress. His evident object is to break Congress morale and compel it to resile from the position it is taking up, that it will have no truck with the present League leadership. Mr. Jinnah broke the Simla Conference. Then the Congress said it would have nothing to do with him. That meant that with the breakdown of the Simla Conference the offer of parity also automatically vanished. That is because even in politics there are certain w "

defined principles which could not be ignored. At Simla Mr. Jinnah played too high a game to suit his purpose. He broke the Conference but he also lost his card. The excellent success that has now attended his efforts at the polls gives him an opportunity to go back to the position where he left it at Simla. But he does not want to say so. It is difficult to say whether the Congress will respond to his indirect approach. That he will accept parity goes without saying. Mr. Jinnah is the cleverest Indian politician. The next few days will show whether he succeeds in holding the centre of the stage indefinitely and for all time to come".

This brutal exposure helps us to understand the mentality of the man. He wants the British to 'divide and quit' probably the British have no intention of dividing or quitting. It is useless to work oneself into a ferment over the visit to these shores of the Parliamentary Delegation and the Cabinet Mission. Past history has proved time and again that concessions from John Bull had to be wrested from him. At no time in the history of the Empire has such a magnanimous gift been handed on a silver platter and an imperial one at that. These visits or Missions might go down into history as a few more failures of bonafide British intentions instead of a few trump cards played by a masterly hand. If Jinnah hopes that as an expression of admiration for his inconstancy White Hall will sanction the creation of "Pakistan" he is very much mistaken. We doubt if British Statemanship is so inept and foolish as to

create a long Muslim belt of nations occupying almost three fourths of the globe from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Bengal and even further.

If every Muslim League member had to follow this westernised Muhammadan Leader even to his latest 'un-Indian' declaration we might have the pleasure of seeing them (as Nichols did in Jinnah) sitting in the window of the St. James Club, sipping Contrexeville while they read 'Le Temps' which was propped against a Queen Anne toast rack-stacked with toast Melba, whilst suggesting that they were gentlemen of Spain, all diplomats of the old school. (with apologies to Nichols)

The only reason we can find to explain Nichols' admiration for Jinnah is because in characteristics he probably resembled Beverley's hero Sir Oswald Moseley. But if a recent page of history is to be turned to good account, to profit the erstwhile author Nichols, he might remember the end of an even greater hero, the gentleman of the 'Third Reich'. One man's *will* never kept a country on the steady road to progress. It takes the concerted effort of the best brains directed towards the benefit and welfare of their countrymen that makes for good government.

As a postscript it would be fitting to include the following press report Bombay 27th 1945. "If the Hindus do not join us in our struggle for freedom then the Muslims of this country and the Muslim League will march alone to their goal of Pakistan and freedom' declared Mr. M. A. Jinnah President of the All-India Muslim League in a

speech here this evening."

"Mr. Jinnah asked the Hindus to face the realities and invited them to march jointly for the freedom of both Hindus and Muslims".

"Both Hindus and Muslims in India are slaves under the heels of the British rulers' said Mr. Jinnah."

"When we fight for Pakistan we are fighting against the British and not against the Hindus. We have to get our freedom and establish Pakistan from the British and not from the Hindus. Our struggle for Pakistan means freedom for both Hindus and Muslims, therefore jointly let us march to our freedom."

"Mr. Jinnah was speaking at a tea party given in his honour by the Memon Merchants Chamber of Commerce on the occasion of his 70th birthday."

"It is a wicked lie to say we are fighting the Hindus' Mr. Jinnah said 'We are not fighting the Hindu community. We are fighting the Congress High Command, who are placing obstacles in the way of freedom for the Muslims and the way of freedom for the Hindus as well. Let the Hindus join us in our struggle for freedom.'"  
(A. P. I.)

Well so much for Nichols Muslims who were breathing fire and slaughter against the hated Hindu. (Von I. P. 59).

London Oct 26th 1946. "A vote for Pakistan

is a vote against Indian independence said Mr. William Cove, Member of Parliament in an election eve message to India."

"Friends of Indian independence, we in Britain are looking forward to the results of the election with hope and confidence that the people of India, as far as the limited franchise allows will make an emphatic declaration for unity and independence' he said, 'I am sure that no British Government much less a Labour Government would agree to a partition of India on a communal basis. Everyone knows this is politically and economically impossible and the effect of every vote for Pakistan is a vote against independence. Independence is the major issue and none of the problems facing India can be solved unless India is free."

"Political liberation of India and freedom for her to govern herself is a necessary prelude to economic progress and I believe that on the day India is free we shall witness the rebirth of her national energies and fulfilment of her national genius".

"Various governments have evolved schemes and constitutions in order to perpetuate British rule, but all have failed for the soul of India will not be shackled. India must and will be free".

"The historical roll of Mr. Jinnah is to prevent the realisation of Indian independence. It is a profoundly regrettable and reactionary role which justifies not only British, but world impo-



-ialism. It is the negation of the religious spirit to use religion or allow it to be used for reactionary political purposes. Friends of Indian independence here are looking forward eagerly to the election results which would be a clarion call to 'Britain from a United India for immediate freedom' Mr. Cove said.....Reuter."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## Hunger.

Now we come to the most tragic episode in this country during the War. Attempts have been made to white-wash the whole affair from every quarter official and unofficial and to shift the responsibility from its proper quarters. The most unique has been Nichols debut in this type of propaganda. To wit (Von India) "Every calendar of every British and Indian Politician ought to be marked with a little memo, towards the beginning of each summer, to remind him of the horror of 1943 and the need to guard against its repetition."

"But there is another reason why it is important to re-enact the tragedy. By large sections of opinion at home and abroad it was regarded as a blot on the British record. The warm-hearted muddle-headed British public who invariably take an almost masochistic delight in putting themselves in the wrong before they have made even the most cursory attempt to examine the evidence excelled themselves on this occasion, by the positive relish with which they shouted '*mea culpa*'. People who could not even find Bengal on the map; let alone give an adequate description of the method of its government-echoed every scandalous accusation of the Congress propagandists and automatically assumed that any statement made by British officers on the spot must be a lie. Indian students at British Universities who must of necessity have been in total ignorance of the

facts were elevated into oracles while British public servants with twenty years experience were condemned almost unheard. It was an outstanding example of a national trait which is usually called 'fair mindedness' though on occasions like this there would be some excuse for describing it as pathological."

He then goes on to outline the cause which according to him was the factor contributing to the deplorable situation. "Simply because the proportion of Muslims and Hindus in the province is so nearly balanced that all devout parents are engaged in a crazy race to produce hildrenc at any cost."

Any sane person who can advance an asinine reason of this nature after an 'intensive study' is not worth taking seriously, for the simple reason that if a question were put to an educated Englishman as to the number of Englishmen in the City of London, he would not be able to supply the answer. It would be difficult to ascertain these statistics without recourse to official data as to the number of Scots, Welsh, Irish, coloured men and foreign nationals, which have to be subtracted from the total population, thus giving one a rough idea as to the number of Englishmen living in London. If such a question were to present an almost insuperable difficulty to the educated Englishman, how much more difficult would it be for an uneducated Indian to know how many Hindus and Muslims resided in the Province of Bengal, which boasts of a popula-

tion exceeding that of the British Isles by twenty million. Further if 95 per cent of the Hindus and Muslims are uneducated it stands to reason that they know nothing of politics and care less, and to expect one to believe that these ignorant people went to bed with their partners with the sole idea of procreating for the purpose of increasing their respective communal proportions for political ends, instead of satisfying the natural urge is an insult to the reader's intelligence.

The onus of the blame rests ultimately on the administration in Whitehall. Indians might be in the Provincial Government, but Provincial autonomy has been a long exploded myth. During the war we have seen instances in which the governors have overridden the advice of their ministers and exercising the special powers vested in them; Probably Nichols could tell us as to what prevented the Governor of Bengal from exercising the special powers of the gubernatorial position to defeat the incidence of famine and to save the lives that were thrown away.

Another question comes to the fore that if the Central Government was not apprised of the situation till it was too late how is it that a government is allowed to function if such mistakes are permitted particularly when they have to be measured by human lives?

After all let us agree on one point that if the provincial Government was in Indian hands let us not forget that an Englishman headed it. If matters went wrong—why was he not called upon

to render an account of his stewardship as our arch-Christian Nichols would have said if the governor were a *Hindu*.

We have heard the propaganda of the B.B.C. that the *British Empire* was engaged in a life and death struggle to preserve the well advertised 'Four Freedoms' it is indeed ironic that almost a million subjects of this Empire should have died from a lack of one of these 'freedoms', hundreds of miles away from the much vaunted battlefields. British propagandists who were so keen on pointing out the starvation which was supposed to stalk those countries under enemy rule completely ignored such a condition in the Allied camp itself.

A deplorable aspect of this tragedy was that despite the fact that nearly ten to twelve thousand died weekly in the Province of Bengal and that nearly a thousand met a similar fate in the second largest city of the British Empire, no visit to the affected areas was paid by either His Majesty the King or the Secretary of State for India Mr. Leopold Amery, or the Marquis of Linlithgow, Viceroy of India at the time. It was left to His Excellency Lord Wavell the succeeding Viceroy whose appointment to the 'Viceregal gadi' was viewed with such suspicion and gloom, to personally direct relief measures on the spot with the military precision which has earned him a place among the leaders of the world. Contrary to Nichols assertion that there were sneering references to Lord Wavell's eye-glass one might go on record by declaring that of the many Viceroys

The 20th century saw a remarkable increase which took the total up to 350 millions by 1931 and almost reached 392 millions in 1942.

With over 75 percent of this population depending upon agriculture, the crux of India's economic planning depends on the question of food supply and its general increase. To show how far this aspect has been neglected we have Radhaka Mal Mukerjee's observation in 'Food Supply'.

"Race between Population and food Production."

"Without adequate measures of soil conservation, regeneration and utilisation, the present hiatus between increase of population and food supply in India will be enlarged. The rate of increase of total food production in India is being increasingly outrun by the rate of population increase. This will be evident from the table printed on cover Page III."

"Since 1930-1 the margin in the case of aggregate food production has been steadily diminishing until in 1937-8 there was an actual deficit of 15 percent while the food supply actually available for consumption diminished by 7 percent as compared with 1910-15. On the whole the food position has shown in recent years, a striking deterioration."

'Deficit in India's Food Supply'.

"Assuming that the daily caloric requirements of the average Indian are 2800 calories, which

allows for 200 calories to be wasted in the kitchen and at the table (or on the floor) India has now fallen short of food for 41 millions of her average men. The average deficit is 423 calories in each man's daily ration. The deficit in food supply will be evident from the following figures."

"India's population in 1935.. 377 million calories				
India's food needs	...	3215	..	..
India's food supply	...	280.4	..	..
India's food shortage	...	41.1	..	..

"If the rest of the population, are assumed to obtain their average daily ration it means that in 1935 there was no home grown food for 48 million Indians".

With these statistics confronting us we begin to realise that India's policy in regard to agriculture should be re-oriented from different angles capable of producing heavy yields of energy producing crops. It is useless to labour the point that a special Food Department should be created in the Government to avoid such a deplorable condition of a country having an extremely high population pressure allowing the non-utilisation of over 112 million acres of waste lands which can be cultivated. It should sponsor every effort to increase the 300 million acres already under crops and bring under the plough those areas which are classed as culturable waste other than fallow.

And repeated references were made to the efforts by certain individuals in this country and the United Kingdom to suppress the truth about

Bengal's dilemma. We presume that Nichols would tell us why such rigid censorship was drawn over the whole affair in India itself, when sufficient broadcasting and advertisement would have drawn the national conscience to seek a means of relief for the destitute? Why were such statistics or subterfuges employed in publishing the deaths, as in mentioning that a few were due to starvation and others to various medical causes? Surely one can realise even in the twentieth century that starvation would weaken the physical resistance to such an extent that any disease is likely to attack the individual with fatal results.

Another editorial of the *Statesman* is worth studying (Tushar Kanti Ghosh 'Bengal Tragedy') "Famine has not been formally declared because it has been explained. Government is not yet equipped with resources for assuming the heavy responsibilities the declaration would entail. For the omission the Ministry has been vigorously attacked in the Assembly and was able to make little reply, for disorder prevented the Revenue Minister from detailing what is being done. There has been recognition that famine conditions prevail, relief is being organised on that basis and the Ministry's policy is to take relief to every village and union where it is needed. That in the province of Bengal's size and dominantly village character, is a policy of large dimensions. Certainly the open admission of famine in a large exposed war base would call forth stern reproof from the British Parliament and people, and give the enemy splendid material for propaganda".



"This sickening catastrophe is man-made. So far as we are aware all India's previous famines originated primarily from calamities of nature. But this one is accounted for by no climatic failure, rainfall has been generally plentiful. What the Province's state would now be, had drought been added to governmental bungling is an appalling thought. Parts of the Bengal district of Midnapore were indeed devastated last year by cyclone, during the wet season now ending; areas in S. W. Bengal have been much flooded disordering the province's communications. But those local misfortunes cannot account for a tithe of the present dreadful sufferings. Japan's conquest of Burma and the resultant loss of Burma's rice exports, has been a big factor. So has the major strategic switch over within India necessitated in 1941-42 by the sudden Japanese belligerence, which the Viceroy-Designate Lord Wavell last week vividly described in a London speech. This set up severe internal stresses. Continued rapid growth of population may also have had influence.

. "But outstandingly the largest factor has been shameful lack of foresight and planning-capacity, by India's own civil governments Central and Provincial. To the discerning, Japan's hostility was no surprise, the surprise rather lay in it not happening sooner. Having privy knowledge of British military weakness in Malaya and Burma, Authority in New Delhi presumably must have envisaged loss to India of Burma's rice exports and the consequent radical upset in the essential food grains trade throughout the eastern

of 1942. The 'Blitz' an Indian weekly in its issue of March 30th 1946 delivered a severe indictment.

"The sum total of two centuries of your economic suzerainty over India is Poverty, Degradation and a sub-human standard of living for one fifth of Humanity ..... The tragedy of Bengal where over 200,000 people were starved to death at a time when national leaders were behind bars makes a fitting memorial to British Raj in India. According to the Woodhead Report, Britain's henchmen and capitalist allies made a profit of Rs. 150 crores—equivalent to Rs. 1000 per death—on the Bengal famine."

That such a catastrophe could have been prevented or mitigated to some extent we have the case of Great Britain as an instance who depended for her food, on supplies from abroad. Ships were used despite the imminence of danger and enemy action to keep those vital supply lines open. Could not this have been done for the Indians in Bengal? That food was offered by the Rebel leader Subhas Chandra Bose is fully borne out by radio reports and the evidence of the Indian National Army Prisoners; To quote from a press report.—

"Two former members of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind Mr. S. A. Ayer (Publicity and Propaganda Minister) and Lt: Col: Loganathan (Director Medical Services and Chief Commissioner of the Andamans) gave evidence on Tuesday before the Court-Martial in the Red Fort Delhi trying Capt: Shah Nawaz Khan, Capt: P. K. Seghal and Lt: Dhillon. Mr. Ayer referred

provinces. Yet nothing was done to ensure that the scores of millions of unmartial people being thrust by events in the war zone should have adequate nourishment. A whole year slipped by after Pearl Harbour before New Delhi even set up a Food Department."

"We say with deliberation that the present Bengal famine constitutes the worst and most reprehensible administrative breakdown in India since the political disorders of 1930-31. Government despite its ramshackle structure, has since that date acquired impressive attitude for handling political troubles, this was shown in 1932-34 and again last year. But it has fallen down heavily over a primary economic obligation."

"Under the present system of Government responsibility for breakdown inescapably rests in the last resort upon Authority in Britain and its immediate representatives here. Every British citizen is necessarily shamed and sullied when his Indian fellow subjects die of starvation in Bengal."

Nichols has made much play with the disgusting petty differences between the parties during the famine. He has cited chapter and verse of their defections, but has omitted to mention a very significant fact that the Ministry at the time belonged to the Muslim League Party. The Party and community for which he had nothing but praise earlier in his book. Bickering amongst the parties was inevitable, for how could they come to any agreement when the leaders of the Congress party were securely housed in jail since the latter end

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to an offer made by the Provisional Government to send 100,000 tons of rice to Bengal to relieve the 1943 famine. He said the offer was not accepted. But rather than undergo the ignominy of having truck with the rebel the authorities preferred to let mass hunger stage its tragic drama in the Province of Bengal with disastrous results."

Time and again the blame has been shifted on to 'Blackmarketeers, hoarders and profiteers' but Tushar Kanti Ghosh gives an effective reply in his book 'The Bengal Tragedy'. "Let not the public lose its perspective. Profiteers must not be spared. On that all progressive elements are agreed. But who are these profiteers? How have they escaped so long from the dire consequences of the law with impunity? How do they continue to carry on their activities? Either they exist or they do not. We refuse to believe that a Government armed with adequate and extensive powers and fully alive to its responsibilities could not track down these men and suppress them completely. If the Government's charge that hoarders and profiteers are abroad has any foundation, in fact, the conclusion is irresistible that men in high places either abet them or are so powerless that they have been forced to yield ground to these food gangsters. In either case the Government's record is discreditable. We make no distinction between the Centre & the constituent units. They must all take their share of responsibility for the distressing situation that has been created".

"But are the hoards an adequate explanation

of the acute crisis that faces us today? There is the vicious spiral of rising prices owing to scarcity or to monetary mal-adjustments. There is lack of co-ordination in policy and programme between the Centre and the provinces and the States. There are reports of ill-planned but independent purchases by agents of the Military authorities and of big employers of industrial labour. There are reports of movements of food grains from place to place for purposes of export out of the country. Nothing substantial has so far been done to bring the system under control by a comprehensive scheme. In the result the minimum requirements of the civil population have been starved".

We have not infrequently heard from the lips of Englishmen similar stories as that given by Nichols of his experience with walnut cake when he attempted to feed a starving villager, because the destitutes only wanted rice and did not know what to do with other types of food. We are unable to bring ourselves to believe these stories because the instincts of *self-preservation* would impel a starving man to fill his stomach with any food, to ease the gnawing pangs of hunger. And to make the version still more incongruous we have his story of the common incident of destitutes fighting over each garbage heap and dustbin for food. Does he also expect us to believe that they expected to find rice in the dustbins when there was a famine of that commodity or food? The answer is an eloquent commentary on the tales regaled to us.

A perusal of the following press extracts will enable us to get a clearer view of the picture.

"Dr. Thompson says that 30 percent of Indians did not get enough to eat, and most of them consumed too little of protective foods. The only immediate solution lay in increasing food production rapidly by applying modern techniques and this was the immediate job for the Famine Inquiry Committee."

He adds "The best Indian diets can produce excellent physique, but such diets are rarely consumed".....

Famine Commission Report..... "It has been estimated by certain authorities that 30 percent of the population in normal times do not get enough to eat. Further a large proportion of the population of India consumes a diet which does not contain protective foods in sufficient amounts. Urging improvement of nutrition as an essential part of the public health programme the Commission says. 'A well balanced and satisfactory diet is behind the means of large sections of the population. The poor man is forced in order to satisfy hunger to depend largely on the cheaper kinds of food. The lack of purchasing power is thus a most important, perhaps the most important cause of mal-nutrition.'"

"Mr. G. D. Birla's assertion that India became a creditor country through sheer starvation and misery is not as one Scottish newspaper has said "a travesty of facts" but the very *real* truth."

The Bengal famine was in part a direct outcome of India's war contribution because supplies were drained off for the war effort, which would otherwise have gone to the Indian population. "On the one hand, was a nation whose stomach was already touching its backbone while being asked further to tighten its belt, and on the other hand an administration which could not possibly regulate rationing (as was possible in Britain) so that every section of the community should sacrifice for the war effort a fair proportion of its pre-war living standard."

Allahabad Nov. 25th 1945 "There had occurred in India no less than 18 famines in the past 25 years, and within nine years 19,000,000 people had died of starvation, a figure not equalled even by the killings in the various wars that had taken place in the last 150 years. A government with this record had no justification to rule over India said Maulana Hussain Ahmad President of the All-India Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind speaking at a public meeting here".

*Harijan* Article Ahmedabad March 31st 1946 (A.P.I.) "Famine in India is not a calamity descended upon us by nature, but is a calamity created by the rulers. It cannot be explained away by raising the bogey of increasing birthrate or other such things" says Mahatma Gandhi in an article in this week's 'Harijan' under the caption "Famine and Birthrate".

Mahatma Gandhi writes "Major General Sir John Megaw, President India Office Medical Board



is reported by a correspondent to have said; 'Famines in India will recur; in fact India is today facing perpetual famine, Unless something is done to decrease the birth-rate in India, the country will be leading straight for a calamity' The correspondent asked what I have to say on this grave issue."

"For me this and some other ways of explaining away famines in India is to divert the attention from the only cause of recurring famines in this benighted land. I have stated and repeat here that famines of India are not a calamity descended upon us from nature but is a calamity created by the rulers, whether through ignorant indifference or whether consciously or otherwise does not matter. Prevention against drought is not beyond human efforts and ingenuity. Such effort has not proved ineffective in other countries. In India asustained intelligent effort has never been made."

"The bogey of increasing birthrate is not a new thing. It has often been trotted out. Increase in population is not, and ought not to be regarded as a calamity to be avoided. Its regulation or restriction by artificial methods is a calamity of the first grade whether universal which thank God, it is never likely to be. Pestilence, wars and famines are cursed antidotes against cursed lust, which is responsible for unwanted children. If we would avoid this three-fold curse we would avoid too, the curse of unwanted children by the sovereign remedy of self-control. The evil consequences of artificial methods are being seen by discerning men even now.

Without however, encroaching upon the moral domain let me say that propagation of the race rabbit-wise must undoubtedly be stopped but not so as to bring greater evils in its train. It should be stopped by methods which in themselves enoble the race. In other words it is all a matter of proper education which would embrace every department of life, and dealing with one curse will take in its orbit all the others. A way is not to be avoided because it is upward and therefore uphill. Man's upward progress necessarily means ever increasing difficulty which is to be welcomed."

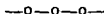
London May 29th "The Bengal Famine will count as one of the major calamities of the war years; and it is obvious that its worst consequences could have been avoided had there been an efficient administration, "says Indian Affairs of the India and Burma Association."

"Many recommendations' adds Indian Affairs have been made for preventing such disasters in the future. All would fail unless corruption can be stamped out. That requires vigorous public opinion of which there are few signs".

"Famine Commission does not embark on the larger question—political in its implications—of whether food should remain a matter for the separate provinces or should pass into the hands of the Central Government. It is obvious what the answer should be to that, but that answer would destroy the case for a weak Central Government which is given prominence in most planning by Indian political parties".....Reuter.

"Referring to the Bengal famine he (Nehru) said that when streets were littered with the dead; the 'favoured few' lived a life of revelry and gaiety as of old; while wāgons were needed to bring food, race horses were being transported, while men women & children died by the thousand profiteers and black marketing thrived."

"The Bengal famine he said was the greatest condemnation of the British Government and 'our countrymen played a shameful part in this crisis.'"



## CHAPTER XVII.

### White and off White

In this chapter Nichols excells himself in extolling the virtues of his community whilst at the same time reserving his condemnation for those few who were unfortunate enough to court his displeasure. We are told that the most singular feature of British rule is the fact, that it is the rule of a mere handful, since the entire population of Great Britain including men women and children would be outnumbered by nine to one if they were all dumped in the middle of India.

It is an incredible fact, which even the Americans who landed on this soil in prosecution of the war could not understand as to how Britain could maintain her hold on these polygot communities, whilst being outnumbered by such great odds. But a close study of the system reveals the ingenuity behind the whole set-up. History has recorded several imperial policies of the past which were successful as the Roman and Greek forms of conquest and imperial administration. One cannot deny that the resident British in India are outnumbered by over 4000 to 1, but the method of maintaining their position is another story. From the early days of the East India Company, which was really a modern version of the Trojan Horse we see how well the British used the differences that existed in the country between the princes and potentates and religious factions to serve their own ends, namely the subjection of

India. As the East India Company became nationalised and took on a more authoritative form in the shape of administration through Whitehall several repressive acts were passed to ensure that no mass challenge to British authorities would ever arise. Arms acts, Gagging acts, Censorship, Security, Defence portfolio in British hands, and a multitude of hangers-on for imperial sophs, that are doled out in each New Year's and birthday Honour's list for service to the crown have all had their direct influence in reducing India to a state of impotence. One might even go so far as to say that economically the position of the people in India is so low that it precludes the possibility of any upsurge of an aggressive spirit to assert the nation's rights; and the nation's dependence on England and other European countries in the sphere of economy and industrialisation have made further inroads on her will and strength to resist domination.

Ever since the Mercantile adventurers followed the example of Clive to raise the status of the East India Company there has been an endless army of the 'Pukka Sahibs' and 'not so Pukka Sahibs' to bring western civilisation with its attendant benefits to the door of the barbarian. These pioneers of the Empire and pillars of British rule might have aroused the following question in Beverley Nichols mind as to whether "Those ancient figures of comedy the-'Pukka Sahib' and his memsahib—do they really exist?' do they yell for *chota pegs* at sundown in the manner of E. M. Foster? Do they 'go out in the mid-day sun' in

the manner of Noel Coward? "Do they indulge in illicit passions against a background of tamarind and sandalwood in the manner of Somerset Maugham?" (von India)

Indians are in the best position to answer these questions. The clubs, messes, and gymkhanas have echoed and re-echoed to the 'sahibs' and 'memsahibs' insistent demand for *chota pegs* and *burra pegs* of alcohol. The 'Pukka Sahibs' of today who have taken the place of the well-to-do middle classes have inherited their pompous ideas of importance, and are striving hard to lift themselves out of the working class groove into the upper strata of society whilst begrudging every cent that escapes their tight-fisted hands.

This segment of English society gives a fairly creditable imitation of what is vulgarly termed as the English 'upper ten' or aristocracy, whose activities back home are given full publicity in the current issues of the Sketch and Tatler. To faithfully portray that type of life they revel in an orgy of parties and drinking, and making the mare of amusement go round as fast as their fabulous salaries will allow. Alcohol to the majority is the nectar of life. It's magic effects are indispensable for the success of their sumptuous dinners, cocktail parties and dances.

India is not blind to the follies of this smart set whose example the dull-witted so slavishly follow. These are the little 'tin Gods' who attach such importance to clubs and gymkhanas, in whose sacred precincts till the start of the Second

World War no coloured people were admitted as members. These are the people who sit on the club verandahs and expand over their whiskies and sodas about the better conditions at 'Home' in 'Blighty' and seek every opportunity to impress the bewildered Indian that India is no place for the whiteman to settle in permanently, but is only good enough to fleece for a lucrative livelihood, while they are content to remain and reflect on Indian soil. The army of servants bolster up their vanity for they like to be considered the 'elite' of society.

They vie with each other to be in the public eye. The air of patronage and their pseudo-superiority complex is well emphasised in the resonance of their affected accents usually associated with Kensington and the stage, rather than the Oxford drawl.

*Their women folk flutter from party to party in the minimum of clothing exposing excessive robust English flesh or undeveloped chests, with the famous backless frocks of the gay 1930's, and spend the better part of their days in the beauty salon repairing the ravages of time and dissipation with jars of cold cream and the help of 'make-ups' from famous continental beauticians.*

Their homes present innumerable ostentations of comfort, luxury, ease and extravagance.

Their audiences at their residences can only be secured through the medium of chits, and their hospitality is well displayed through the offering of

'*nimbu pani*' (Lime Juice) and generous quantities of the ubiquitous whisky and soda.

It is this set of English society which fill the 'box seats' of a cinema. The first row of a theatre; the reserved enclosures on race days, and receive garden party invitations to Government House that refuse to mix with the 'not so Pukka Sahibs' for fear of social contamination.

The 'not so Pukka Sahibs' recruited from the English working class and belonging to the lower strata of society in England form the bulk of the Tommy-Atkins army and the subordinate services. They have so far only distinguished themselves by their outstanding ability to drive hard bargains and to lead a life of almost complete obscurity.

The morals of the Europeans in India are confusing. To the puritanical outlook of India they resemble a stage of demoralization which threatens the sanctity of the home and ensures the disintegration of society. The eternal triangle so conspicuous amidst this community is treated lightly by society.

We have dwelt at length on the drawbacks in the British character, but there is another side to their temperament which deserves commendation. During the dark days of the present war despite reports in London and the bitterness of the troops stationed in India about their hospitality and activities, one is compelled to admire the fortitude and courage shown by them in their quiet confidence, that despite losses and defeats the British



cause would emerge triumphant. The sacrifices they made both in time and money and pleasure to contribute to the welfare of the troops in work parties, canteens, hospital work and of their health etc : deserve praise. The unfair criticism levelled at them by Nichols and others is totally unjustified. If he were pained to see them attending race meetings (whose takings were partly meant for the war charities), because it was in bad taste. let us remind him that in order to serve their country they tapped every source to augment the war funds either by directing appeals, staging shows, organising races and everything which could show some profitable return. Why begrudge them an afternoon at the races when they had given so much. If there were "a sea of thirty-horse-power cars burning petrol, which has to be brought thousands of miles through perilous seas", let him also reflect that part of the price per gallon of petrol went to prosecute England's war.

Some of his countrymen appeared to him as the members of the Bombay European Association did "a collection of liverish nobodies sunk in suburban complacency, ignorant, petty and pretentious, "and of course, some quite frightful people, particularly in the female line, vulgar sex-ridden women who spend most of their lives in the long bar of the hotels, trying to look like ladies and cōcottes at the same time, without any notable success in either direction. They are petulant and domineering", but one must take one's hat off to them for their co-operation in the war effort.

The average Englishman has the courage of his convictions and speaks an open mind regardless of consequences. He has further the ability to steer clear of communal prejudices in the prosecution of his job *if it is not connected with politics*. He acts according to his lights and one cannot help but confess that *a conscientious Englishman* is without equal in any sphere. The same can be said of any European or national in the world if his conscience is uppermost in his dealings.

To Nichols' sweeping statement that "Courage you must grant to the judges, steering a straight furrow through a jungle of falsehood, trickery, and vituperation; to the doctors sticking to their principles in an enervating atmosphere of superstition and hostility; to the business men fighting a ceaseless battle against rivals to whom the most elementary principles of business integrity are alien and incomprehensible". We must question him if trickery, falsehood and vituperation are the sole monopolies of the Indian nation? If Indian doctors' principles inspired that book of A. J. Cronin "The Citadel"? And if the most elementary principles of business integrity are *alien and incomprehensible* to the Indians, why Britain is so bent on trading with India? And why for the sake of her trade she maintains her hold on this country? Why English business men set themselves up in India? And how they managed to save tidy fortunes to enable them to spend their lives playing golf on the green courses of England unless they are more unscrupulous than their Indian rivals? Or is this yet another

example of Christian justice of *right* prevailing over *wrong*?

## II.

A quixotic touch is afforded by the author about his three main criticisms of the British in India, 'if they are considered as individuals rather than as cogs in the Imperial machine.' We are pleased to note that he has had the courage to perform this *reductio ad absurdum* to the highly satisfactory number of three. Ask the Indian? and the reply would be revealing indeed.

One of the main criticisms is that the British never say 'thank you' for any service performed for them by the servants or menials of this country. Why should they? These Clive-minded cogs in the imperial machine feel superior to the Indian because they entertain the notions of having conquered the Indian. Their attitude continues to be that of a ruling nation toward a subject nation. After all the preferential treatment both in employment and remuneration accorded to the Britisher over the Indian in similar conditions of service despite the loud proclamations of democratic equality, can only foster the notion of superiority. With the benefit of these lessons in everyday life and those culled from English history, why should the white man unbend to thank the subject of a slave nation for any service done for him?

What greater condemnation of the social and economic reaction of British rule in India can one give than Nichols own observation? "There

is no need for the cynic to tell me that they greatly preferred this 'bakhshish' to any social graces by which it might have been accompanied. Their wages are so miserable that they would let the sahibs spit in their faces for an extra anna. Sometimes the sahibs come very near to doing it".

"A system which permits men to abase themselves just to keep body and soul together is no credit whatsoever to any government.

"Because Nichols had spent a night in a bug-infested village he felt compelled to cite this as an outstanding example of a sensitive Britisher's attempt to understand the people. He advocates this approach to his fellow whitemen and holds this lack of initiative against them. But if he had himself undertaken to travel in a third class railway carriage, and all other Britishers in this country did the same their education on the subject of India would be greatly improved and they would understand the natives better. They would have discovered that strange affinity which exists among the lower classes irrespective of caste or creed and who for most part of their chequered lives rub shoulders with each other without any serious communal dissensions. Here they would have seen the true Indian with his fine sense of hospitality and consideration for others. Above all they would have learned the word 'thank you' whether it was expressed as 'Mehrbani' 'Shukriya' or as a mere 'Salam'.

"The British have got a lot out of India, but have never said thank you, but when Nichols blinds

his eye to facts by suggesting that the Indians have also got a lot out of the British and failed to say 'thank you' he is guilty of misrepresentation. Whatever the Indians have got out of the British they have paid in blood, tears and sweat in true Churchillian language. British enterprise in this country has been well paid for through Indian money. The freedom of the natives has been sacrificed on the altars of imperial rule, since Clive with his East Indian Company began to mould India's destiny. Would any man in his right senses devoid of impartiality expect the exploited to utter a word of thanks to his exploiters? Would it be more correct for the capitalist to thank the labourer for helping him to establish his personal fortune? or the labourer to express his appreciation to his capitalist employer for providing him with a job to keep the spark of his miserable existence alive?

That India has benefited in more ways than one under British rule it cannot be denied. She has enjoyed a form of peace which she has seldom known in the earlier days. Industries of the west have slowly found a niche in India's economic fabric, & fruits of Western research in every sphere of civilised life have been brought to India's door. The progress achieved under the aegis of British administration is appreciated by the Indian but they are now beginning to realise that this progress was initiated to a very large extent to serve the interests of the rulers. The continued bondage, the methods and ruses adopted by the ruling power to maintain the 'status quo' is a factor which is

largely responsible for inflaming public sentiment against the British and the under-current of resentment so noticeable in Indian circles.

### III.

The second main criticism to be levelled against the British who live in India by Beverley Nichols is that they do not live in India at all "Their heart is in the highlands or in Kensington High Street. They make not the smallest effort to understand the country and their only thought is how soon, and how profitably they will be able to get out of it."

"These people used to say to me *ad nauseam*.

"What? You're going to write a book about India, when you've only been out here a year? Good Lord Man! I've been out here over twenty years and I don't know a thing about it." (V. on I. P. 220).

For once we are in complete agreement with the author. It is indeed a sad commentary on the administration to make the well justified observation that the Indian knows more about England and the English, than the Englishman knows about India or the Indians. Those pioneers or to be more correct fortune-hunters who come out East know nothing about the country, or its people and care less. They arrive on Indian soil with preconceived notions as to the standard of culture of the people they have to administer to. They are unable to differentiate between the various communal denominations, and after read-

ing a few newspapers on the communal differences, and listening to garbled accounts of the country from ubiquitous Britishers who serve up the lagging stories at the bar of their experiences in India, they come to the very praise-worthy conclusion that the Indians are just 'bloody natives' who cannot be trusted. Natives who are just dying to break each others heads with bamboo sticks if their white saviours would only permit them. People who are alien to *truth* and must be civilised before they can take their place in the modern world as an independent nation.

It comes as a great shock to these white gentlemen to hear their own mother tongue viz: English spoken so well by the educated Indian. They are unwilling to believe that in comparison the diction and grammar of the King's English as spoken by the educated Indian is far ahead of the majority of Englishmen (with of course no need to have recourse to spelling authorities for words over three syllables, as advocated by Nichols).

Quite a few come out expecting to see Indian life as portrayed on the screen complete with its mud huts amidst jungle surroundings, in which apart from the barbarian the Christian Crusader had to contend with the wild beasts of the Jungle. How any person can expect these people to rule with any measure of justice over a nation about whom they profess such ignorance, as to its historical background and cultural learnings, and about which they make no effort to understand is beyond comprehension? However there it is. A piquant situation, in which loud, propaganda

makes up for the shortcomings of British colonial officialdom,

It is pointless for Nichols to advocate to his fellow countrymen to see Indian films to educate themselves on the pattern and design of Indian life, when they show their bull-doggish conservatism by professing not to understand American humour as typified by their (American) films which are in a class by themselves in the film world.

It is of no use to recommend the reading of the 'Bhagavad Gita' (the Hindu Bible) when they know so little about their own, and can only quote such interesting lessons as 'an eye for an eye' and 'a tooth for a tooth' or to be more blas'è could it be 'all my eye'.

Above all why read Abb'e Dubois *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* when their own is in such dire need of repair? We have constantly had it served up to us on every occasion that the Britisher in India is not representative of the Britisher in England. We can only sigh in relief that 40 million inhabitants of the British Isles do not suffer from the dreaded disease of growing too big for their boots, and an unrestricted swelling of their heads through self-importance. Thank God at least they dwindle to the diminutive stature of 'mere man' in their own homeland.

#### IV.

What the nature of his third criticism could be is left entirely to our imagination. If his



reference to E. M. Forster's "A Passage to India" is meant to be a clue we can take up the challenge. It is true that friendship between Indians and Britishers in its altruistic sense is impossible, owing to the gulf that ever separates them in the shape of culture, tradition, and outlook on life.

Forster's immortal garden party is still held on a thousand Indian lawns. The ranks have drawn closer, and the figures intermingle, but East does not merge with the West. If we inquire into the reason we discover that the position is changing despite the Englishman's efforts to remain on top. The day of liberation for the 'under-dogs' is fast approaching and all parties are aware of it. The child of the backward nation has grown to the point where he is ready to question and challenge their right of authority and presumption. Their patronage with its pseudo 'Oxford drawl' jars on his nerves and he begins to feel that he is just as big a cock as any in the Universe, when in his own backyard.

We are constrained to contradict Nichols when he attempts to apportion the blame to other quarters by observing "that it is not the fault of the British . . . . not by any means. Very often when the British hold out their hands the Indians refuse to shake them. Here is an example. Most of the clubs in the hill stations are mixed, members meet on terms of perfect equality, provided that they pay their subscriptions, no questions are asked, no privileges given."

*"So far, so good in theory. But in practice*

what happens? The Indian men refuse to allow their wives and daughters to come to the club. They come themselves, night after night; they dance with the wives of British officers, but their women folk stay at home. And that annoys the British, particularly the young male British. Even in the houses of comparatively 'advanced' Indians, the women are often locked away out of sight as though one would jump on them if offered the opportunity". (Von India)

It is a puerile type of reasoning to advance such arguments which cannot survive intelligent criticism. To expect the Indian to play ball by bringing his wife and sister to the club just to keep the 'pukka sahib' and the 'memsahib' or the 'young male British' company while they sipped the world famous Scotch Whiskey is to betray a lack of insight into the customs of the people. Let us go back to the early days, when Indian men associated with members of their own sex for social recreation. Their wives did not figure in any social function except to mix among themselves. With the advent of the Britisher and subsequent English education the 'advanced' Indian began to be initiated into the Westerner's method of living with more latitude for the feminine sex.

Till the start of the Second World War the Britisher saw to it that the gulf between himself and the Indian was not bridged socially, by maintaining exclusive clubs for himself and his own kind. Only when concessions had to be made, to pacify those who were shedding their life's blood

on the several battle fronts for the British cause' and those in India who were contributing in money and service for the prosecution of the war, the Britishers became sufficiently magnanimous to permit coloured people to become members of the gymkhanas etc; It was at this stage of generosity that Nichols arrived to make his incorrect observations. There are still clubs on Indian soil that cater for an exclusively 'British' membership and God help the Indian who ever entertains hopes of being included among its august ranks.

To the vast majority of Indians who are tied down by tradition and custom this idea of allowing their wives and daughters to accompany them to the clubs is something which they dare not contemplate. Just to please the 'pukka sahib' why must he do the things which are *not done*? Just because he observes the customs of his caste and race, and thereby denies the sahib the pleasure of either fooling or flirting with his women folk, it should not be held against him. There are quite a proportion of the educated and advanced Indians who follow closely in the footsteps of the European in social activities. They bring their womenfolk, to the parties where they execute the latest ball-room steps to western music; drink and behave in a manner that would do the sahib great credit. This form of morality which the orthodox Indian has always looked upon with disgust and which he regards as moral disintegration, shows clearly how much western culture has permeated the the Indian social structure. India is slowly being led through the various stages of barbarism, civili-

sation and demoralisation. In all probability if she is fortunate enough to have another literary 'Messiah' of the Nichols type in another fifty years to deliver another momentous *verdict* the observation will not be concerned with the backwardness of the people, but about their amazing aptitude for imitation.

If the Indian will not play ball according to the Britishers' rules, why does not the Britisher play ball according to the Indians' rules? and confine his wife to the home. We feel sure he would be a far happier man with less need to rely on 'Scotch and Soda' to soothe his feelings.

## V.

Nichols has introduced us to the sore problem of the 'Anglo Indian' by prefacing his verdict on them in the following fashion "What do you think of the Anglo Indian?" By his answer to this question the 'pukka sahib' will probably reveal his true mentality. Why must the 'pukka sahib' be asked this question when his own countrymen have at some time or other been responsible for their origin? It is almost like asking a criminal for an opinion about the crime committed by him. If he had the courage to face the truth and shoulder his responsibility Nichols would never have had the occasion to observe later in his chapter, and with some justification that "the tide of British power is ebbing fast, and the Anglo-Indians are left stranded on the beach, scanning the empty seas for a friendly sail..... a sail which will never come".

I could quite easily pen a few lines to refute his allegations as most people of this community would do as a matter of self defence, but, as long as a man has a conscience and the courage to acknowledge his faults he will not be able to resort to evasion to hide the bitter truth.

In all that Nichols says about the community he has hit the mark and we must give credit where it is due. He has written a "Verdict" and a book which purports to be authoritative must show the merits and demerits of the people in question no matter in what light the reader might take it.

Amidst the welter of arguments, crusades, and delegations for independence the sore and vexing problem of the Anglo Indian presents an almost insoluble enigma to Indian politicians who are bent on hammering out a favourable decision on the anvil of politics.

In the heat of communal passions which is the keynote of Indian characteristics the Anglo-Indian appeal for self-determination is scarcely heard. Their position at present is uncertain and their future hangs in the balance. If India according to the optimistic prognostications of her leading lights in the political arena succeeds in obtaining independence, there is every possibility of their extinction like the 'Dodo' bird or through determined resistance survive the acid test for communal recognition.

The precise definition of the Anglo-Indian till recently was somewhat nebulous. Even now

various interpretations are placed on it by various sections of the public.

According to some he is the result of a fusion of western and eastern elements; others aver that a bonafide Anglo-Indian is the issue of European parentage, but born in India. To the 'pukka sahib' who has never made an effort to study or understand these loyal supporters of the British he is just the *unfortunate* who happens to be born on the wrong side of the blanket. The true legal definition is that they must have pure British parentage on the male side to enable themselves to be labelled as Anglo-Indians. But whatever the definition it is irrelevant, for the problem which faces this community numbering roughly three hundred thousand of all colours from white to deep purple is purely economic, and proof of pedigree will not be of much avail in the fight for a livelihood in the near future.

It is not a pleasant task to pen a picture against a community to which one belongs, but if the book is to be of value as a medium of information it must be done. I shall portray the peculiarities of this community as I see them, free from malice or prejudice.

This treatise may arouse a diversity of opinion but it might be as well for the reader to bear in mind that it is purely confined to the writer's experiences. The allegations might fit a large proportion of the community and some will consider themselves as exceptions. It is the exception which proves the rule and it is the rank

and file, the mass which we are judging. After all, a knowledge of our own defects is half the battle won on the road to progress.

The community as a whole possess very few qualities which evoke universal commendation, while on the other hand the major portion of their characteristics reflect very discredibly against them. The chief part of which is their pride built purely on a foundation of egotistical assumption. This superabundance of 'pride' which is both irrational and ill-conceived is looked upon as a virtue worthy of attainment, even though the most elementary principles of Christianity forbid the cultivation of this detestable quality. They would make any sacrifice rather than lower its colours. Of course on rare occasion in which there is material gain their eagerness to profit submerges their pride, but only till their purpose is served. At every conceivable opportunity it reappears only to defeat them of their real purpose in life.

The main reason for their unenviable position can be directly traced to the excessive cultivation of the above named sin. The progeny of Anglo-Indian parents have the advantage of economic luxuries and comfortable surroundings which preclude any possibility of a proper start in life. These luxuries have a softening affect on the mental attitude of its victims, thus preventing them from accepting positions on the lowest rung of the ladder of success. Their desire is to secure high salaries which can procure every sensation

for the mind and body. Salaries that can command a retinue of servants to wait on their whims and fancies. Their ancestors steeled through privation and want laboured for ridiculous wages which appear like a small monthly allowance compared with the financial idea of the Anglo-Indian lad of today. He wants to start from where his father left off. His idea of a bare living wage is by far higher than his circumstances and merit would warrant. The excuse tendered for this demand is that in educational and social qualities he considers himself infinitely superior to his predecessors, and to accept the same scale of wages offered to his parent when starting life is tantamount to an insult. The manners and views of the older generation he holds in amused contempt. Their advice and restrictions appear to be just a pathetic effort to remind him of his filial duty and loyalty. Though there may not be an open admission on the point of his presumed notions of superiority over the older generation, and which is well fostered by egotism, it does not shew that it does not exist at least in the sub-conscious.

The prevalent conception amongst the young blood of this community is to aim high in order to receive something in proportion. The vital question as to whether they have the necessary qualifications for these onerous positions does not enter their calculations. They feel that regardless of their physical and mental equipment the state is indebted to them for a post. In their conclusion they exclude that very elementary lesson



concerning the ladder. The person who endeavours to climb must set his foot on the first rung before any attempt can be made on the second. A sudden decision to place one's foot on the middle of the ladder if not a practical impossibility might entail disastrous consequences. If by dint of luck one succeeds can the human frame stand the strain? A casual reflection on this moral will offer sufficient conviction of the advisability of lowly positions for a start in life. Even the leaves out of the biographies of most self-made men add their weight to the benefits that accrue from the lowest steps to the giddiest heights of success. But the significance is entirely lost on them.

Their failure to secure such desirable positions as may be consonant with their ambitions leaves them totally dependent on the slender resources of the family. A situation in which some are perfectly content to remain. Their psychological outlook is well summed up in their refusal to accept small salaries in an effort to save a false sense of dignity.

It is not uncommon to come across adolescents able to fend for themselves waiting for the plum positions to arrive through medium of luck. It rarely occurs to them that the necessary requisites for securing employment is courage and perseverance added to an infinite capacity to assimilate the rebuffs of adversity. The major portion of the blame for this tragic condition rests on parental shoulders. They are responsible

for fostering these exaggerated ideas of importance of their progeny. It is but natural that parents would wish to see their children with the best that life can give but there are limitations to such expectations. In their efforts to protect their children from the hard and cruel world they ignore the harm done by depriving them of a dominant will and courage.. ...Courage to face the disasters of life and a strong will, with which to surmount all the obstacles in the way of absolute independence. All these unselfish actions end on a negative theme. They are more often than not forsaken by their children, who if they manage to do well for themselves hate to be reminded of their origin through association or otherwise.

To a large number of them work is a detestable necessity and as far as possible its responsibilities are often shirked. If labour was not essential for a bare existence in this artificial world these would cheerfully lead a life of bloated ease. The mere implication of hard work assumes terrifying aspects chiefly due to their early environments; inertia is encouraged by the hand and foot waiting of a host of servants ready to execute the whims of their little masters. This can only lead to the creation of a lazy and backward community. They have inherited the worst traits of both nations. Their pride from the West and their indolence from the East. Both of which society in India has helped considerably to thrive and exaggerate.

When little boys in school spend most of

their time in useless dissipation of their parents' money on cigarettes and other ingenious methods for flouting the regulations, one can foresee the future of the community. At work the young blood's minds instead of being centred on self-advancement are on the office clock impatiently awaiting the signal to go home. This valuable time which could be employed to better purpose is spent in planning the evening's entertainment.

In the numerous dance halls which dot the Indian country side unemployed Anglo-Indian youths may be seen gambling, drinking, smoking and proudly parading their sweethearts on their parent's money. Some have even had the audacity to marry these girls, and the unfortunate parents whose means are already strained are hard put to it, to support the unwelcome additions to the family. Money to these gay young sparks has no value except to purchase pleasure. Their philosophy is to spend what their parents have put aside for a rainy day. The trouble and sacrifice that had been necessary to put aside this small fortune does not in any way give these children sleepless nights.

In educational institutions the Anglo-Indian has besides a fair amount of intelligence the advantage of the language in his favour, yet despite this superiority over the Indian students he usually occupies the tail end in the order of merit because he lacks the grit to keep his nose to the grindstone. In later life it is useless to rail against the government, the country or their fate when they receive

their just deserts. 'As ye sow, so shall ye reap' is a truism and to expect preferential treatment at the expense of the Indians for service rendered to the crown in the Mutiny and both the Great Wars by their ancestors is incomprehensible. The services and reputation of predecessors will not cover the deficiencies of the present generation. The only hope to eke out more than a bare livelihood lies in competition with the Indian.

A large percentage of the lads of this community have very little education to their credit. Their views on sex hover on the line of depravity. In their early teens their thoughts turn to love, prostitution, adultery and marriage. The rigid codes of morality are treated with indifference and ones allowing greater latitude are often substituted under the guise of broad-mindedness. Many young lads unable to support themselves have realised their paternal ambitions at the expense of some ignorant girl before they have reached their twenties.

The community as a whole appear to possess neither the will power nor the ability for the task of regeneration ahead of them. They satisfy the needs of the body beyond measure and utilise most of their time in slander, malicious gossip and libel. Unlike the Indian who offers full co-operation for national improvement the absence of unity and cohesion is most conspicuous in the ranks of the Anglo-Indians. Their self-indulgence and backwardness is primarily due to the *'laissez faire'* policy of their political organisation in regard to the internal administration of its affairs. Its complete want of initiative leaves the leaders open to

adverse criticism. Leaders who are sometimes looked upon as deluded idiots and indeed they must be under a delusion to shoulder the burdens of a community lacking the energy to ameliorate their present status. Beneficial results from such associations can come only from hard work, support and *not* from empty optimism.

As a community composed of so many pigmentationations they are extremely colour-conscious even though they have coloured blood running through their veins. This antipathy towards colour almost developes into a mania with quite a few of them. The fairer element not infrequently claim European status and their topic of conversation invariably veers round to England. They refer to it as 'Home'. These imaginative people have no difficulty in establishing their birth place in the United Kingdom at such places as Dulwich, Woolwich, Ipswich till one begins to wonder if they have any more 'itches' to account for. To make sure that they convey the right impression they always preface their conversation with 'as you know I'm Irish' or 'my relatives in Scotland' etc. and it is indeed humorous to hear these people whose homes do not extend further than the shores of India allude to the United Kingdom as their home. It is a source of speculation as to whether most of them have ever set eyes on that home, or have even seen the sea till they came to India's seaports.

The striking peculiarity is that even a large proportion of the coloured members of this community suffer from the colour complex. From the

age of reason onwards they entertain desires of selecting mates from the caucasian races. The underlying reason may be to present the state with children lighter in complexion than themselves or it may be a source of pride to feel that they are parents of children, who might some day lay claims to European status. But whatever the motive might be this attitude reveals an utter lack of common sense, for not infrequently their ambitions lead them to contract relationships either above or below their social standing. The inevitable result is that an indefinite number lead a very miserable existence with every possibility of being deserted during their marital life.

They are truly a community of 'weather cocks' ever eager to take sides with either the Indian or the European according to the propitious direction of the wind. They earn their livelihood in India and draw on the Indian exchequer for a pension or provident fund after retirement, yet despite this they look down on the Indian populace. Their mimicing of European mannerisms and peculiarities down to the smallest detail and their failure to recognise or credit the Indian for his accomplishments will stand as an obstacle in their path of progress. The only way to have an effective voice in the affairs of India lies in a complete renunciation of their pride and their full co-operation with the peoples in India. To sit by their firesides and make plans of settling abroad after their active life is to admit that they are not entitled to a fair share in the economic advantages of India, and that they are as ashamed to be born

on Indian soil). This insistence on being recognised as a community quite distinct from the statutory natives of India, besides being puerile is rightfully regarded by the rest of India as hostile to the welfare and progress of this subcontinent. It creates a situation which can in no way lessen the friction of the community being a square peg in the round hole of India's fight for self-government.

## VI.

Now that we have reviewed at length the problem of the Anglo-Indians and showed up their faults dispassionately, let us now turn our attention to the cause which led them to this position. Whichever way one might view this community we are unable to escape one conviction that the root cause of their backwardness is their strong complex of inferiority. Admit this and we have found a solution to all their ills. They have this in abundance and it is this hydra-headed monster which reappears at every stage to draw them further away from their goal. The responsibility for the creation of this complex lies on British shoulders. They have encouraged this quality with a vengeance despite their proclamations of equality.

In his early infancy the Anglo Indian youth is subjected to a ceaseless barrage of propaganda about the superiority of the Britishers over other races. English professors and masters have been in charge of educational institutions in which they have pointed out *ad nauseam* about what a

marvellous man an Englishman is, how efficient, truthful, hard working, conscientious, just, and trustworthy. As an administrator he is second to none in the world. To support this we have liberal doses of English history pushed down our throats. A history which records only the British point of view. It is almost a miracle if the victims ever escape with an unbiased mind.

When he is at the school leaving age he has been well prepared for the role of the 'underdog'. Later the conditions of employment are such that an Anglo Indian youth is barely able to keep his self-respect, whereas the British youth is given better wages with excellent prospects and situations in which he can use his authority. The pedigree of the Anglo-Indian is held against him where promotion to the higher cadres of service are concerned or for membership in the exclusive clubs. No provision is made for him in the army navy or air forces (till the present war). He is looked down upon by the 'pukka sahibs' who make no effort to conceal this from him. All these factors tend to make him realise that if his antecedents had been of the same racial stock he would have fared better in this artificial world.

The facilities and privileges extended to the pure European group socially and economically had its effect in influencing the Anglo-Indian to associate or lay claim to European status. This sad state of affairs generated in him a peculiar complex which manifested itself in a decided anti-Indian bias and a very pro-British attitude.



All the seeds of the present dissension of the community were sown by the British during a period in which they held the reins of administration in their own hands. For faithful service to the crown they were promised preferential treatment in the sphere of employment. This treatment was accorded in the beginning because it suited the purpose of the ruling power as the community knowing English almost as good, if not better than the Englishman possessed the added advantage of knowing the Indian temperament. This community made it possible for the facile running of the machinery of the government. They can rightly be called the pillars of British Imperialism in India. This spoon feeding of the community in the beginning created a service minded people with a spirit of inertia and a deluded hope that this situation would continue till the end of time.

Though the Anglo-Indian community forms ten percent of the literate people in India, the Indian began to outstrip them in every field. They took to higher education and business realising that commerce was the backbone of a nation. In a short while they were able to dictate to the ruling power till now we see the old, old story repeating itself, of power passing from one hand to the other. This change of power places the Anglo-Indian community on a different footing. The advantages he held in language etc: will be a drawback as the future official language of India will *not* be English, but one of the vernaculars. It will be, as hinted by the several proposals put

The late leader of the Anglo-Indians Sir Henry Gidney foresaw this predicament and warned his following to cultivate a pro-Indian outlook and to regard themselves as sons of the soil. Mr. Frank Anthony his successor has followed in his footsteps but it remains to be seen if they will accept this good advice or in their blind folly go to the wall. A few press cuttings will show how the changed situation is affecting the community. "Statesman March 13th 1946 Sir—Emigrationist" was wrong in suggesting that Anglo-Indians are not accepted as one of the Indian peoples merely because of their way of speech, dress, and social customs".

"India is perhaps the most hospitable and tolerant country in the world but many years of ignorant arrogance and bad manners have deprived us of a place of affection, even respect in our motherland. The petty privileges and safeguards we have received from the British at the expense of the Indians is another just cause of resentment against us."

"The sooner we mend our manners and rely on our merits, not on artificial aid, to win us a respected place in the new India, the sooner shall we find our future brighter and more secure".

"Let the predominantly European Anglo-Indian go to havens of refuge like Austrália. He is the 'renegade' who has done the community enough disservice already and who has by falsely classifying himself with Europeans on voters 'lists', and in the census tables produced the ridi-

culous official figures that show Anglo Indians as a smaller community than the Europeans in India. By this one act alone he has emasculated the community and tied the hands of our leaders who are fighting the case of the smallest political minority in the country against tremendous pressure from the other minorities, each counted in millions and each fighting hard for the best place it can secure in the future constitutional set-up..... Yours etc : R. A. Stracey I.C.S."

The remainder under the heading of Anglo-Indians Problems appeared in the Statesman.

"Sir..... A. L. M. has come to the right point regarding the future of the Anglo Indian community".

"It is time we stopped making childish representations to Britain and crying out for sympathy and support. Britain's policy so far has been 'remember us in times of war and unrest, but forget us in times of peace.'"

"We have chosen Mr. Anthony as our leader because we know he is capable of leading us, but he alone can do nothing. What we need is closer co-operation from every member of the community and each one of us to take an unselfish, unbiased interest and if necessary active part in the current affairs of this country."

"It is time every one of us realised that India is our country and endeavoured to get together as such in a strong body and interested ourselves in the 'life and movement around us' Yours etc :

M. A. L."

"Sir 'Anglo-Indians have all over the country been seeking sympathetic relationship with the other Indian communities and they are just as anxious as any Indian for full self-government for India".

"To this end are working many Anglo-Indian youth movements, for it is on the attitude of Anglo-Indian youth of today, that the security of the community in this country depends".

"Emigration is no solution for it can only be accomplished by the few escapists who have the means. The Anglo-Indian Association, a body competent to express Anglo-Indian opinion does not advocate emigration, but urges Anglo-Indians to realise that India is their home and their destiny..... Yours etc: R. J. Aviet Anglo-Indian study circle Cal: Dec: 17th".

"Sir,..... Mr. Frank Anthony's statement at Birmingham that 5,000 Anglo Indian girls have married British servicemen and will soon be in England raises the question whether he is not wasting the communities' funds on a futile mission.

"Even if his statement is true what is his purpose in parading these facts? Is it the usual prayer for British help? There are far more important issues for him to discuss in England".

"Such propaganda will make more Anglo-Indian girls look to Britain and America for husbands and homes. A general walk-out on their community by the Anglo-Indian women cannot

solve the community's gravest problem, its numerical inferiority ..... Yours etc: Anglo-Indian Cal: Nov: 19th 1945".

It is well worth quoting Mr. Frank Anthony's address at London Nov. 28th 1945 to the Commonwealth group of the Labour party in the House of Commons as reported in the Statesman. "It was difficult if not impossible for persons in Britain nurtured in the principles of real democracy and against the background of a homogeneous and common nationality to appreciate the very real racial differences and divisions in India".

"Mr. Anthony claimed that he could speak with knowledge and impartiality on the communal position as between Congress and the Muslim League. He was friendly to both the parties although he acknowledged allegiance to neither".

"The Congress he thought had been relegated to the position of representing only caste Hindus. The Muslim League could certainly claim to speak for the Muslims."

"Dr. Ambedkar the recognised leader of the Scheduled castes was bitterly hostile and the Akali party which really represented the Sikhs did not owe allegiance to the Congress".

"The Anglo Indian and Domiciled European community numbering half a million were the best organised community. It was totally distinct from the Congress".

"Mr. Anthony said that he saw no hope of an

agreed constitution for India. If the Labour government decided to impose a constitution he hoped it would not be based on the principle of 'numerical democracy'. For India this principle was quite meaningless".

"In a country with an overall literary percentage of five, adult suffrage was fantastic".

"Mr. Anthony thought he had a very real message for the British authorities here: He believed that in the present critical stage of Indo-British relationship the Anglo-Indian community could play a vital part in bridging the gulf. They were the only hundred percent literate community and they formed ten percent of the total educated section. Their contribution to the fighting services was out of all proportion to their size. Out of about 14,000 officers in the Indian forces about 6,000 were Anglo-Indians".

"India's three greatest departmental and strategic assets—Railways, Telegraphs and Customs were founded and built up by the community."

"Allowed to play their full role in India today the Anglo-Indian community could form a tried and highly tempered link between India and Britain".....Globe".

London Nov: 28th "The claim of the Anglo-Indians to be consulted with other minorities on the plans for a new India should be frankly admitted declared the Times in a leading article on Mr. Frank Anthony's address to the East India Association last Monday".

"Saying that Mr. Anthony's speech served the useful purpose of directing attention to the present position, and future hopes of the community which constitutes a very special and direct link between India and Britain. The Times pays a tribute to their 'fine record of steadfast loyalty in peace and war. For long the position of the community was somewhat invidious and their identification with the maintenance of British rule seemed to darken their future prospects. But they are now accepted as statutory natives of India and rank among the minority communities entitled to proper safeguards'".

"The Sapru Committee ungrudgingly recognised the justice of the Anglo-Indian claim to adequate representation both upon the body which will frame a new constitution and upon the executive and legislative organs of the future Indian Commonwealth".

"But it is important that the community should be afforded the necessary opportunities for pressing their claims which the Indian leaders seem disposed to accept, and Mr. Anthony expressed the fear that the proposals of the government for membership of the constitution-making body and for remodelling of the Central Executive might result in involuntary injustice to the Anglo-Indians",

"In view of the moral responsibility resting on this country to afford equal opportunity to all sections of the people of India to take their due place in the new dispensation, the claim of the

Anglo-Indian community to be consulted in common with other minorities deserves to be frankly admitted.....Reuter".

From the above press cuttings the reader will realise the predicament the community has been placed in through its steadfast loyalty to the British cause, and hence this sudden realisation on their part to cover lost ground. If John Bull had shouldered his responsibilities like the gentleman he pretends to be, and the community had not taken advantage of the early preferential treatment and relied completely on the promises given or implied, there would be no need for us to have occasion to remark with profound regret that the "Anglo-Indian is like a tragic Kim who has lost his way in life". (V on India).



Loose Ends.  
CHAPTER XVIII.

After all the valedictions and high pronouncements contained in his sweeping 'verdict', the author at the end of his book is suddenly overcome with a sense of modesty to admit that in a book pertaining to the portrayal of life in India, it is quite inevitable that there would be gaps. He goes further in his admission that "If one lived in India for three hundred years there would still be endless deficiencies in one's knowledge. An army of scholars working for many lifetimes, would only be able to skim the surface of a country so complex and so imponderable". If we are unwilling to make the concession that the learned author, namely Beverley Nichols is equal in energy and perspicacity to an army of scholars combined with the efficient results of many lifetimes then our attention must inevitably be drawn to the gaps that have been created in his 'one year of intense study'. Needless to say in view of these short-comings the gaps must be considerable. Unfortunately for the seemingly strong personal case made by the author, the gaps are sufficient to warrant the impartial reader arriving at the conclusion that his 'Magnum opus' is a distorted view of the panorama composed of a tissue of half-truths with not very correct interpretations.

*THE STATES.*

If as Nichols points out that judging from the debates in the House of Commons it would

suggest that most of the speakers were quite unaware that nearly two-fifths of the territory of the country is not under British rule. Then it shows up more clearly their unfitness to rule over a country about whose condition and composition they profess such abysmal ignorance.

Out of a total area of 1,774,000 sq miles enclosed within the boundaries of India 675,000 sq miles come under the rule of the Princes forming 562 States. These areas vary in size from 19 sq miles to states like Hyderabad (Deccan) and Kashmir, which are almost as large as any country on the European continent.

These 562 'states' embrace a total population of approximately 80 millions. There is no occasion for surprise or suspicion to presume that the honorable members of the House of Commons are unaware of the importance of the States. It is but natural that they do not concern themselves with the States as provision has been made for their continued good behaviour. So they attend directly to British Indian matters pertaining to 320 million subjects, who are the cause of more than one headache to John Bull.

Before we proceed further, let us fill in one of the gaps which Nichols has forgotten to mention. The reader might conclude that these 562 states form a single political unit, but this is far from correct. The ingenuity behind British rule becomes more apparent when we discover that these are separate political entities responsible to the Paramount Power (British). Each is adminis-

tered separately and no connection is permitted with the administration of other States. Whatever relationship might exist between them is regulated by the Paramount Power. Till only recently the Princes have been permitted the right to meet in Simla under the auspices of the Chamber of Princes to discuss policy and common matters of interest and action in relation to the States.

We reiterate once more that the Indian States are *not* a creation of British rule. We would not be guilty of laying such a false claim, but we do assert that their continued outmoded existence or perpetuation is due to British rule. We are not ignorant of the rudimentary facts of history and above all we are *not* blind to the trend of modern history. Monarchies are toppling everywhere. The reins of administration and power are passing into the hands of the people and monarchs in most parts of the world are mere nominal figure-heads. That India should fall in step with the times is inevitable, but such progress will be held up as long as John Bull and his henchmen are on Indian soil to perpetuate this anachronism.

## II.

Nichols felt obliged to compare and admit that the advance in literacy, industrial development and administration in some of the States like Mysore were far in advance of British India. He also arrived at the conclusion that nobody could deny that democracy was not possible in an Indian State after reviewing the debate in the

## Mysore Legislative Assembly.

That democracy can become an accomplished fact we concede provided the rulers initiate this form of Government into their domain, and allow it to function without interference. But if democracy is to be the form of Government in the State and found eminently suitable for it, why then should the States not be included in the democracy of a United India without being responsible to several hundred rulers?

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If again Nichols continues to reason on the lines of 'one swallow making a summer' in regard to the administration of a few States like Mysore, Cochin and Travancore, and presumes they apply to other States as well, why does he have to admit later in the same chapter that rulers have been deposed and "in the course of time, the States will either, have to go or to effect such considerable modifications in their institutions, that their functions, will be practical rather than picturesque. On the whole, it is probably desirable that they should go, if only for economic reasons. They form a series of artificial barriers to the free development of Commerce; and they represent a large reservoir of wealth which should be more profitably employed. It is ludicrous, for example, that the Nizam of Hyderabad should be allowed to sit like an immovable idol, on a mountain of gold that is never put into circulation. Men of wealth so fabulous should be taxed like ordinary mortals." Again "it is undeniable that in a few of the smaller States there are grave abuses of the peoples' rights."

and monstrous perversions of justice, to say nothing of private debaucheries which defy description. The British of course step in when things have gone too far, but the general feeling is that they do not step in soon enough. The lurid melodrama of more than one Maharajah should have been nipped in the bud during the first act instead of being allowed to run its course of murder and intrigue." (Verdict on India).

This offers incontestable proof to our argument that these artificial barriers to a free development of commerce and progress must be eliminated and drawn into one United India.

### III.

We have the very interesting reason put forward by Nichols to explain away the superiority of administration of the advanced Indian States over British India. Speaking generally he declared, that, when the States showed any special excellence, they owed it to a period of benevolent autocracy, which he attributed to British tutorship of rulers during their minority, thus inculcating in them a spirit of enlightenment which moulded the policy of the state more on the lines of old fashioned liberalism than oriental tyranny. If we ascribe all the present benefits and achievements to British influence and tutorship, do we have to account for the historical monuments such as the Taj Mahal and other relics of India's past greatness in the same light? If so would Nichols kindly supply the tutors' names. They are surely worth mentioning and perpetuating in the annals of history if

one of these monuments, the Taj Mahal is regarded all over the Universe as one of the 'Seven wonders of the World'.

How do we then account for the standard of civilisation obtaining in the East about 5000 years ago as evidenced by the excavations of Mohen-jodaro and Harappa, when the Britishers at that time, called the Celts or men of the Stone Age, were content to paint their faces and bodies with woad and resort to the use of cudgels for protection? Nichols could probably enlighten us.

The Reforms and subsequent development of Mysore were initiated by the late Maharajah of Mysore. He set an example to the rest of India by reposing his confidence in a Muslim Prime Minister Sir Mirza Ismail, even though he himself was a devout and orthodox Hindu. The reason for this development is not climate or waterpower or even tutorship as contended by the author of Verdict on India, but a sense of responsibility and duty by both the Maharajah and his Premier, who were ever content to serve their peoples. This could have been achieved in British India, but instead we have the following dismal observations made by an editorial in the issue of the *Blitz* dated March 30th 1946 under the heading. "Agriculture Disrupted Industry Destroyed". "Montgomery Martin answering a question (No. 3877) asked by the Select Committee of the House of Commons (1840) had the frankness to admit that 'the decay and destruction of Surat, of Dacca of Murshidabad & other places where native manu-

factures have been carried on, is too painful to dwell upon. I do not consider that it has been done in the fair course of the trade. I think it has been the power of the stronger exercised over the weaker".

"This 'Power of the Stronger', has been exercised through a variety of notorious devices; through discriminatory tariffs and imperial preferences through an over valued currency. A monopoly of the Exchange Bank which encouraged British exports and discouraged the Indian through trade agreements enforced in the teeth of opposition of Indian legislatures, through discriminating railway rates encouraging foreign trade to the detriment of internal trade; through dubious trade practices like rate wars and deferred rebates—to cite only a few of the more glaring examples!"

The editorial then goes on to give facts and figures of India's present plight. These 8 points are worth perusing.

(1) "An occupational disequilibrium of the population: 70.6 per cent in agriculture 17.4 per cent in Industry, Trade, Transport taken together".

(2) "Millions of unemployed and under-employed especially agriculturists.

(3) A humiliating industrial backwardness: to give but one example up to 1939 the Indian Merchant Shipping had a tonnage of 1,31,748 as against 8,63,000 of a single Imperialist trading concern like the Standard Oil Company. You no doubt are aware of the fact that members of the

Lowjee Wadia family built 13 vessels for the British Admiralty between 1810-21".

To continue its damning indictment it proceeds by referring to National health.

"A fifth of humanity in animal plight".

"The sum total of two centuries of your economic suzerainty over India is poverty, degradation and a sub-human standard for one fifth of humanity, it may be summarised thus."

(1) "60 per cent of our people are either badly or poorly nourished (Sir John Megaw, Ex-Director General of Public Health Government of India) and that "the diet of the mass of population is deficient in quality (Per capita consumption of milk is 5 ounces as against 39 in England) and often in quantity, and much of the ill-health and disease in India are attributed to malnutrition (Dr. Ackroyd, Director Nutrition Research Laboratories, Coonoor)".

(2) "That our milk contains more bacteria than the London Sewage water (Mr. R. A. Pepperall Milk Marketing Adviser to the Government of India)".

"You made the adulteration of Indian Cotton a penal offence as early as 1829. Are not cotton or milk the British version for Guns or Butter".

(3) 97 per cent of the working class in Bombay live in one room tenements with 6 to 9 persons to a room (Royal (Whitley) Commission on Indian Labour)".



"The slums of Calcutta are so awful that Mrs. Muriel W. Nicol of the recent All-party Parliamentary Delegation had not imagined anything like them in her sickest dreams "We have been in India for 150 years and it is a disgrace" she said that these things should exist"

(4) In Bombay 281 out of every 1000 children born alive, die within one year as against only 47 in London"

(5) Every year at least 100 million persons are attacked by Malaria, and malaria by its direct and indirect action is almost certainly responsible for at least 2,000,000 deaths each year (Lieut. Col. J. A. Sinton, once Director, Malaria Survey of India).

(6) Tuberculosis accounts for 270 deaths in 100,000 persons in Calcutta, as against 87 in London. Dysentery and Diarrhoea for 252 in Bombay as against nil in London. Typhoid 90 in Calcutta against 0.4 in London. Or do you think we must not compare ourselves with you? But only with Asiatics even at that Small pox takes a total of 24.4 per 1,00,000 in British India against .02 in Japan and nil in the Dutch East Indies (G. B. Grant Director of the All-India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health).

(7) 85 per cent of the Indian people are illiterate. One in every five children of school going age attends a school. At this rate of progress it will take 140 years to reach complete literacy in India. And you spend Rs. 0 8-9 per head of popu-

lation on education as against Rs. 33-2-0 in your country (Sargent Report on Postwar Educational Development).

(8) We have in India one doctor per 9000 persons and one nurse per 86,000. The comparative figures for your country being one doctor for 776 persons and one nurse for 435 persons".

After citing these eleven points the paper goes on to conclude that British rule has left India a legacy of Hunger, Disease and Death. The damning indictment is worth reproducing "A hundred and fifty years was a long time to experiment with the health and welfare of 400 million people". "You and your country gentlemen have given a fair trial to your civilising mission and succeeded in endowing us with Hunger Death and Disease. It could not be otherwise, for to quote Gandhiji again whose words do not escape him without his knowledge.....'You tinkered with the problem' and naturally so".

"The Official world was taught to think no better. Originality there can be none in a close monopoly like the Government of India. It is the largest autocracy the world has known, Democracy has been reserved only for Great Britain. And when it rules and exploits millions belonging to other races it becomes an unmitigated evil. It corrupts the whole Island with the idea that such exploitation is the best thing for an enlightened democracy to do." (Harijan 17-2-46).

"Mark the date it is not 8th August 1942".

“One thing more. Corresponding to the class of loyal absentee landlords in agriculture you have encouraged a class of coupon cutting capitalists to grow in the Indian industry, who are most eager to join you in Junior partnership, if you will but keep the urban coolies in check and the rural ryots in ignorance”.

“This is the same class of blood suckers that during the six years of toil, blood sweat and tears paid you an Excess Profits Tax of Rs. 200 crores (200,00,00,000). The Brutus of Indian economy will at least be grateful for the magnificent inflation which he wanted us to believe was just a little scarcity of goods!”.

“When the common man was asked to tighten the belt on an empty stomach, when more and more necessities of life were passing beyond the reach of the workers, peasants and middle class .....he made excess profits legally and through the black market, by bribing your officers”.

“When cloth prices were soaring sky high they went up by 400 percent before the Government of India thought of controlling them, and the per capita consumption of cloth was falling from the prewar 17 yards to 10. The textile shares on the Stock Exchange were experiencing an unprecedented boom.

“Or when the coolies and ryots of Bengal were dying by thousands this class made according to the Woodhead Famine Enquiry Commission a profit of Rs. 150 crores equivalent

to Rs. 1000 per death !" (Blitz)

An editorial in the Statesman of Oct : 9th '45 gives us further proof of the neglect in realising the assets of India.

### "Unexplored Wealth".

Geologically India is a land as yet lamentably little known, only about a tenth of its area of 1,547,679 sq: miles having been mapped. If this seems slow the fault is not the geological surveys, for its normal cadre of 30 geologists is quite insufficient for the task. The area mappable in a field season of six months depends on the complexity of the local geology, but an average of about 350 sq miles would probably be done by one geologist on a scale of one inch to the mile. On this reckoning it would take 200 geologists 15 years to complete the geological map of India on the standard scale".

"Handicaps which have hitherto slowed the Survey's work are, however to be lessened. Extensive exploration of India's mineral resources is planned by the Government and to enable the existing geological Survey to undertake this, its staff is to be increased and there will be more facilities for research. Extra staff will include 70 experts, seven superintending geologists, 18 ordinary geologists and 45 assistant geologists. At the present India's expenditure on geological surveying is about Rs. 6 lakhs. This it is estimated will now be raised in five years to about Rs. 21 lakhs. That, though for India relatively large, is

nevertheless an exiguous sum compared with those spent by some other countries of large area. Russia for instance is reported to have spent the equivalent of Rs. 50 crores on geological surveying in 1936 and to have that year employed over 5000 geologists. Britain a very small and already geologically well explored area spent more than India on geological surveying before the war.. ... Rs. 9 lakhs. There moreover the activities of state employed geologists were supplemented by much valuable work by university staffs and mining companies. In India apart from work carried out by the oil companies, the amount of geological mapping done by non-official agencies had been negligible.

“Water odd though it may seem is perhaps the most valuable Indian mineral. Appraisal of available water resources and their possible development will be among the enlarged surveys most important functions. It will be required to advise on dam sites, reservoirs, bridge foundations, land-ships, building stones, road metal, soils, and soil erosion. Large post-war dam construction has been projected in various parts in India, as for example Bengal”.

“Minerals as more popularly understood will need also to be energetically investigated. The success of India's plans for industrial development must hinge in part on exploitation of her reputedly vast resources in many valuable minerals now under-ground. Besides opening up new areas where mineral deposits are found during geological mapping there will also be the problem of

obtaining maximum production from recognised mineral areas already under active development, such as coal fields, mica belts, iron ore seams, manganese deposits and the copper belt. Mines have to be mapped in more detail and should be under constant geological inspection. Only thus can information be got whereon to base deductions for discovering new deposits in a mineral area or for extending that area's life to the maximum. Years of painstaking effort may be needed. Only recently was the geological survey enabled to do detailed work on India's mica belt. Yet India produces 80 percent of the world's better class mica, vital to the electrical industry. Its future will depend upon deductions based on complete knowledge of the structure, formation and localisation of the deposits".

"Another valuable aspect of the survey's work will be co-operation with the proposed Fuel Research Station in the study of India's coals. Close liaison will be needed with the Oil Companies. Nor can field activities be properly completed without good laboratories and libraries. Some provision is made for these under the expansion plan. In the Survey's present library is a sound collection of geological literature, when reorganised it should be among the best in Asia."

"No fixed limit has been placed on expansion of the survey. To obtain, during the next five years or so, enough fully trained Indian Geologists for the country's needs, may however be far from easy. Some of the reasons for this were indicated

by Sir Cyril Fox at a recent speech in Calcutta. Moreover, owing to the War, Geological Education has been interrupted in many lands, and it is necessarily a long process about as long as education in medicine. India like European countries, though not for the same causes at the present lacks good young geologists. Until she gets them, and it cannot be done as suggested in some quarters by hastily shipping students overseas for a two years course. She must procure others where she can, on contracts suitable to herself and them. Science and technology are not matters of race, and India's needs of men fully knowledgeable in these subjects will be urgent during the strenuous post-war period."

"On November 12th. 1945 in Bombay the National planning Committee demanded the recapture of control of all major enterprises from foreign ownership, as they deemed that this foreign control of agricultural, mineral and industrial enterprises in India had warped and retarded national development."

#### IV

The British policy towards the States might be realistic adjudged from the Imperial standpoint, but we in India cannot help but differ. If Nichols intends frightening us into accepting the States' continued existence as a '*fait accompli*' even in a free India by presuming that "To tear up the treaties as though these were so many scraps of paper would not only be an act of perfidy, but it might set in train a disastrous series of commotions and

persons that illustrious lineage has not ceased to implant noble and chivalrous ideas, fine standards of public spirit and private courtesy. With the loss of these if ever they be allowed to disappear "*Indian society would go to pieces like a dismayed vessel in a storm*" What other observation can he be expected to make when as Viceroy he had partaken lavishly of the hospitality that the Princes are so fond of showering on the Imperial representatives of the Crown?

### *Education*

To discuss this subject in all its ramifications would require many volumes if it were meant to be relegated to the academic plane only, but the 'high spots' of Nichols conclusions need another approach to give the Indians a more practical view.

Unfortunately as Nichols mentions there are two schools of thought on the question of education in India. The first contends that it is worse than useless to push literacy down the throats of the starving people, and the second that it should be the first duty of the state to encourage education so that by raising the standard of intelligence of the peasant it would inevitably lead to a similar improvement in his standard of living. Education costs money and the astronomical sum involved in educating the whole of India seems to magnify the problem.



on the problem. This economic condition seems to have worsened. To even a layman, not interested in Government statistics there is sufficient evidence available to show that in the rural areas starvation or semi-starvation is the order of the day.

In the cities educated young men are ever on the march for a mere pittance. Unemployment figures were mounting in times of peace and only the war caused a temporary lull in its steady increase.

Let us use our imagination in selecting means to solve this problem other than the shortsighted view of the Government. To perform this seeming miracle let us review the situation as it stands.

(1) 89 percent of the population is rural i. e. 340 millions approximately (Beverly Nichols in Verdict on India).

(2) "Diet Surveys suggest that at least 30 percent of the population of India or over 100 million people are habitually underfed in normal times". (Imperial Council of Agricultural Research Blitz March 30th 1946).

(3) "The country does not grow enough food today for the people—the consumption per capita falling from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs to 1lb: before the war and a mere 12 ozs: in 1946 (Blitz 30th 1946)."

(4) "There has been practically no increase during this century in the average yield of rice and wheat per acre which remain about the lowest in

the world (Royal Institute of International Affairs in a food plan for India (1946) Blitz March 30th 1946)".

Of the remaining 11 percent in the urban areas we make the following observations.

(1) The failure of educated young men to obtain employment on living wages.

(2) Millions unemployed owing to the inability of Industry and Commerce to absorb the swelling ranks of the educated.

(3) What possible inducement could there be for education in a system which has only succeeded in establishing such poor results as an average income of Rs. 65. per capita against over £100 in England. The question which arises from a perusal of these statistics is what effect these Government sponsored Anti-illiteracy drives have had on this acute problem? So far the only results achieved by these drives is to render the problem still more acute. Where the villager or ignorant agriculturist had been content to lead a rural life, this drive has taught him letters and opened worlds hitherto unknown to him. He feels deep down in his being a sense of frustration and longs to see the wonders of city life: Once there, not even wild horses as Nichols observes will draw him back to the dull monotony of the village. This yearning to be in the city and its subsequent realisation has a two-fold effect on the problem. The first is that the ranks of the unemployed is swelled considerably with less prospect of suitable employment.

Secondly, Agriculture suffers in that it is neglected and fewer people are available to shoulder the heavy responsibility of feeding the nation.

If we proceed with the hypothesis that every problem has its solution this problem could be solved without the Sargent estimate of 400 crores, to create an educated but far from practical nation,

The solution lies in first eliminating the non-cultivating owners such as landlords and zemindars from the position of pure capitalists that live by the exploitation of the landless labourers. Organise the capitalist ownership on a more equitable basis with the cultivators so that this breed of blood suckers together with the pernicious system that permits the middle man to draw his disproportionate share at the expense of the labourer will not function as effectively as before.

(2) "Prevent the acute subdivision and fragmentation of land. In a village surveyed by Dr. Harold Mann the size of an average holding had come down from 40 acres in 1871 to 7 acres in 1914-15. In the comparatively more fertile province of the Punjab 58.3 percent of the holdings are below 5 acres. There are thousands of 'toy holdings' of  $1/160$  acre or 30.  $1/4$  sq yards (Blitz 30th March 1946)"

(3) Distribute the land more equitably between the landless cultivators on a basis of collective ownership.

If all this money spent so uselessly on Anti-Illic

eracy drives were utilised on training suitable personnel to supervise and aid the agriculturist in the layout and planning of their farms. To help them increase the yield per acre through expert soil classification and the use of all types of fertilisers according to the latest scientific researches. Organise co-operative credit societies to help finance cultivators; To teach the villagers how to live more hygienically and thus preserve their health and energy. To improve the condition and breed of livestock. To create better marketing facilities and above all to train the farmer to convert his surplus stock not marketed into commercialised products, such as butter cheese & breakfast cereals etc. Also to facilitate greater co-operation between the urban and rural areas in regard to disposal of produce through the organisation of new commercialised manufactures.

In this manner the standard of living will inevitably be raised as the average cultivator will have better returns for his produce and sufficient inducement to stay in agriculture? The improved conditions of living will enable them to take a more practical view of education and in turn realise the importance of the farmer in the civilisation of today.

On the question of foreign education we have an editorial in the "Daily Gazette—Dr. Arundale is very emphatic on the question of National Education; All the great efforts made in the past by Mrs. Besant and Gandhiji have failed in, spite of their early promise. Lakhs of rupees have been spent and the achievement was not commensurate

with the labour involved. As long as India received a foreign godless education not suited to her genius it is futile to think of national regeneration. There are people who glory in their foreign clothes as at Hyderabad (Sind). Nowhere in India has Dr. Arundale seen such abundant imitation of foreign dresses as in Sind, and the foreign tongue has completed the circle of denationalisation. The tinned milk of westernised Eurasianism he thinks, is a bad substitute for the mother's milk of Indian culture and civilisation. Unless the whole of the present educational system is recast on the lines of pure Indian thought and culture, there is little hope of progress on the right lines in this country. Mr. John Sargent may have come out with his 400 crores plan for the spread of education. 'Is it not going to be a denationalised education, a godless education, and a cultureless education, which neither feeds the mind nor nourishes the soul?' Asked Dr. Arundale".

### LANGUAGE.

Nichols has once again unearthed a 'mare's' nest. His contention that nothing annoys the Congressman more than the re-iteration of the simple fact of the existence of 225 languages in India. This fact does not annoy the Congress politician and neither does it drive him to invent replies that are supposed to be misleading, for instance that "A speaker in Hindustani can make himself understood anywhere in India". That this statement is the simple truth is lost on the author of Verdict on India who in his extensive

study failed to allow some latitude to his observations, instead he has been content to characterise this as a 'blatant lie' and also gives expression to his own lie that 'Gandhi' wants to lump the two languages of Hindi and Urdu together under the common name of Hindustani.

Let us study some Indian history in order to acquaint ourselves better with the situation. In the dim past hordes of invaders poured through the Khyber and Bholan Pases in the North into India.

As each one drove further inland the original inhabitants were pushed further south, where they took their culture and practised their own quaint customs. The invaders brought with them their own customs, languages and religious rites and introduced them into those areas under occupation. As one invasion after another took place the former conquerors were dispersed to other parts of India where they settled and lived according to their own ideas of life. Communications at that time being in its most primitive state with very bad roads (if any), long distances between towns and shortage of food and water prevented the intermingling of these different races on a very large scale. This semi-isolation coupled with marriage within the community established for some time the definite characteristics of separate communities each with their own peculiar language and mode of living.

As time progressed some of these enlightened rulers spread their influence to major portions of

India. They encouraged the inhabitants to study their culture and language and in no small measure set the first steps to ultimate unity of the nation. In this way the two major religious groups namely Hinduism and Islam spread, and though its influence covers every point of the compass from Kashmir in the North to Cape Comorin in the South, from Calcutta in the east to Karachi in the west, they can claim devotees from every cross section in the country. From the Pushtu speakers in the north; Urdu and Punjabi speakers in the Punjab. Sindhi from Sind; Bengalee from Bengal; the Oriya from Orissa, the Hindi from the United and Central Provinces, Malayalam from Malabar Cochin and Travancore; Tamil from the Madras Presidency; Hindustani of the southern variety Telegu and Kanarese from the Ceded districts and Mysore; etc.

That a very great proportion of this cross section follows the banners of Hinduism and Islam respectively proves conclusively the fact that the basic thought underlying every language in India possesses one common unifying ideal. The pattern and design of life among the Hindus regardless of the language they might express themselves in, is the same throughout India. Similarly with Islam.

With the advent of the British and their introduction of the railways, better roads and improved means of communications, this intermingling of the different language groups was carried out to a greater extent. Familiarity with each other's tongue became a vital necessity and through such

agencies as the Indian Army, Railways, Telegraphs, and other important services this contact with each other became part of their daily lives. This intermingling proceeded to a point where Hindustani (apart from English) has become the only medium of language, which one can utilise with greater chances of being understood throughout the length and breadth of India.

Hindustani, rightly speaking is the colloquial language used by the people of India. Over 150 million people use this as their language. Tamil and Malayalam very similar in phonetic sounds, pronunciation etc, is spoken by the majority of the people in the Madras Presidency. Kanarese and Telegu also similar in phonetic sounds, pronunciation and style of speech etc. is spoken in the south as in Mysore. Marathi, Gujerati similar in many respects is used in the western side of India like Poona, Kholapur and Gujerat; Bengali in the Province of Bengal.

Sindhi, Punjabi, Kashmiri are offshoots of Urdu and used extensively in Sind, Punjab and Kashmir. Pushtu and Brohi is used all over the North West Frontier Provinces and Baluchistan.

Out of these 225 languages twelve to fifteen can rightly be said to occupy a prominent place in the official languages in the country. The rest are dialects and utilise scripts which do not possess such a large following as Urdu, Hindi, Gujerati, Bengali, Marathi, Gurmukhi, Tamil, Telegu, Kanarese, Konkani, Malayalam etc.

It is a safe bet that 60 per cent of all these



people expressing themselves in the above languages speak Hindustani as well. A common feature of the Indian where language is concerned is that he invariably knows more than his own mother-tongue. He usually includes Hindustani and boasts of a smattering of English if he aims at being a tri-linguist. From this it will be seen that contrary to Nichols assertion that it is a 'blatant lie' to claim to be understood anywhere in India by speaking Hindustani, it is perfectly true. Further proof of the nonsense he has been responsible for writing is the fact that British officers have drawn extra allowances for mastering Hindustani both oral and written (in the Roman style of course) under the heading of Urdu. Surely the Authorities would not be guilty of perpetuating 'this blatant lie' at their own expense and have to use their money, hands, feet and head to convey their meaning to the natives. The only type of Hindustani not so very intelligible to the native inhabitants of India is the 'Englishman's Hindustani'. This peculiar language has a vocabulary all its own. It expresses itself freely in a mixture of English and Hindustani, and finds its most effective expression through the British soldier, who delights in extra exclamations of liberal English B's D's and F's. How the barbarians dependent on their goodwill manage to understand these imperial representatives is almost a miracle.

To come back to the study of languages Hindustani spoken colloquially is written in two different scripts. Under the heading of Hindi, the Devnagri Script is utilised and the charact-

ers are written from left to right. This is high flown and classical. Urdu which is classical and a still more high flown style of expression utilises the Persian Script written from right to left. The finest thoughts of Arabian and Persian culture have found their way into the Urdu writings. The difference in the vocabulary of both these scripts can safely be estimated at 20 per cent. In the remaining 30 per cent there is a common expression and style of pronunciation that even a practised listener could not tell the difference in the scripts being read out to him.

If Nichols holds Gandhi responsible for coining the word 'Hindustani', could he tell us as to what name this language was known by, before Gandhi arrived on the Indian scene early in the twentieth century? Also what language the British used in their dealings with the natives of India during the Mutiny of 1857.

In order to bring about a greater understanding between these two great communities, the Muslim and the Hindus, prominent reformers have advocated the cultivation of a *Lingua Franca*. A common language which could be the most effective means of integrating the unity of life and literature. A language which will be the irrefutable and irrefragable identity of Indian life amidst multiple modes of expression. Several press reports in this connection are worth citing.

"Wardha Feb. 27th 1946 "The first conference of the All-India Hindustani Prachar Sabha, which began here yesterday under the

presidentship of Mr. Gandhi, ended today after unanimously adopting two resolutions. The first one which urges that both the Devnagri and Urdu scripts should be popularised, states that those who know one of them should learn the other, while those who know neither should learn both the scripts. All Indians should be able to read and understand both the Hindi and Urdu styles of Hindustani".

"The second resolution asked Mr. Gandhi, Dr. Tarachand and Moulana Suleman Naqui to appoint a committee of not more than 15 members for the purpose of compiling dictionaries, standardising the rules of grammar and vocabulary and producing the right type of literature. The committee will prepare an estimate of expenditure for Gandhi's approval and also keep him informed about the progress of their work".

"Mr. Gandhi emphasised the necessity of learning Devanagri and Urdu scripts of Hindustani. It is idleness that prevents one from learning other languages he said. "If anyone comes to me, I can arrange to teach him not only Hindustani but 10 or 12 other languages he said".

Mr. Gandhi said "If we cannot overcome the difficulty of two scripts, how can we achieve other things still more important? This move will help us in bringing about unity. I know my limitations and so I hope to succeed with your co-operation in this".

Another press report entitled 'Common

Script' "Sir...., I agree with Mr. Shafqat regarding the necessity of a common script but differ from his choice of Roman".

"The East has its own scripts. Of these Arabic is most widespread. Every Muslim wherever he may live has to read the Koran which is in Arabic characters. Thousands do not read the Koran because of their ignorance of the Arabic script, but that is ignorance and no justification".

"No country can now live in isolation. The regions surrounding India are mostly inhabited by people who know the Arabic Script. Even in China over 70,000,000 Muslims live in areas adjoining Indian tracts. There are about 100,000,000 Muslims in India."

"India ought to choose a script which will place her in a position of advantage in reference to her neighbour. Arabic is that script. Romanization may mean tacit acknowledgement of the absence of a suitable script in the East. This is not correct."

"Non-Muslims of the East should consider this question dispassionately. Let us choose a script which provides all modern facilities. I will not hesitate to advocate any other script of the East if I am convinced that it is more current and useful than Arabic. Yours etc: Momtaz. Feb: 26th 1946. Statesman."

*Lingua Franca* "Sir., ...One of India's primary needs is a lingua franca. The conference of the All-India Hindustani Prachar Sabha which

met at Wardha-sometime ago under Mr. Gandhi's presidentship has given the right lead".

"One of the two resolutions passed makes it incumbent on all Indians to be able to read and write Hindustani in the Hindi and Urdu styles, those knowing one of the two languages should learn the other, and those knowing neither should learn both. The other purposes compilation of a Hindustani dictionary and the production of the right type of literature,

"The task is formidable. A determined and patient effort will be required to work towards a solution by combining words common both to Hindi and Urdu in order to frame a new language. It is not clear how the Sabha is going to accomplish the object embodied in the first resolution. Mere persuasion cannot be effective, an element of compulsion will be necessary. Government will have to be moved to make Urdu and Hindi compulsory in the Primary and Secondary Schools and encourage Hindus to acquire proficiency in Urdu and Persian, and Muslims in Hindi and Sanskrit".

"The criterion for selection of Hindustani words should be their widest intelligibility, and in the absence of a proper word either in Urdu or Hindi, recourse should be had to the best among the equivalents in other Indian languages like Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Tamil or Telegu, instead of looking for one in foreign languages. Urdu and Hindi are two different names for Hindustani. Nearly 80 per cent of the

words are common mainly of Sanskrit and partly of Persian origin, and the basic vocabulary, syntax and conjugations are scarcely distinguishable from each other. Mr. Gandhi said at the conference, 'there is no reason why, what was once the common language of both Hindus and Muslims should not again become our lingua franca; Yours etc. Bharat R. Mathur. Lucknow March 31st 1946'".

That the first steps have been taken in this direction is borne out in a press report in the Statesman.

"Vernaculars to replace English 'Lucknow May 1946. Vernaculars are to be mediums of instruction in Lucknow University from the next session, which begins in July after the summer vacation, replacing English for the first time in the history of any University of the Province. As adopted by the Executive Council of the University on Tuesday, the recommendations of a special committee set up last year are that teaching in the B.A. B.Sc. B.Com. and L.L.B. classes should be started in Hindi and Urdu from the next session in examinations to be held in 1949, 1950, and thereafter the language should be Hindi or Urdu; in either Deva Nagri or the Persian script.

"Other recommendations adopted suggest that teachers may use the Roman script in instruction, but should normally use the Nagri or the Persian script. Students should use the Nagri or Persian script when essay writing or doing other exercises but those not conversant with either may be permitted by heads of the Departments to use the

administration in the traditional spirit of British sportsmanship. We take our hats off to him for his spirit in lying bare the truth without attempting seriously to evade the issue.

A summary of his observations are quoted below.

(1) "Britain's industrial and agricultural policy is and always has been the least creditable part of her Indian record".

(2) "That the Department of lands should occupy one small office in the Department of Health and the Department of Education, is monstrous particularly when agriculture is a pressing need of India".

(3) He describes it as equally monstrous that in the fifth year of the war, India which was claimed as the 'Arsenal of Democracy' should be capable of producing a few spare parts for one or two of the more primitive war machines.

He is honest enough to say that "when the Congress proclaims that Britain had deliberately kept India in a state of Industrial backwardness, Congress is telling nothing but the *truth*".

(4) "That all heavy industries such as automobiles, ship building, locomotives and armaments" to say nothing of chemicals "have remained in a state of stagnation".

(5) British efforts with Government connivance had destroyed the establishment of the Indian Chemical Industry.

Roman script. Those teachers not conversant with the Nagri or Persian script should arrange to have students' essays or answers to exercises read out in the class".

"Special facilities should be provided to ensure that extension lectures are given in Hindi or Urdu from the beginning of the next session. The Government are to be requested to suggest to other Universities in the Province to adopt a similar scheme."

"To overcome the difficulties presented by technical terms the Executive Council urged the Government to ensure, as speedily as possible, compilation of Hindi and Urdu Dictionaries of technical terms to enable all universities in the Province to adopt a uniform terminology in preparing text books and to sanction Rupees 25000 for the purpose."

"The Council also set up a Committee to consider the Report of the Narendra-Deo-Committee for reorganisation of University Education in the Province".

### *-Industry and Agriculture.*

Throughout the major portion of this book we have been busy showing up Nichols' faults as a judge, as a propagandist and as a student of India. Towards the latter end of his chapter "Loose Ends" he emerges as the true Englishman. The Englishman as the world imagines him to be with a *conscience* and a man who has the courage to put down the faults of his countrymen's.



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(5) British efforts with Government connivance had destroyed the establishment of the Indian Chemical Industry.

(6) "That infant Indian match factories were squashed in the interest of ostensibly Swedish but really British factories. It is the same story with cement, and of course automobiles".

(7) The British talk of a 'new spirit' he dismisses as mere eyewash and illusory. In support of this he describes the Bevin boys Scheme as applied to India. 50 Boys for every three months till 1946 would result in a mere thousand trained hands out of four hundred millions; and he admits the Congress claim "that it is proved by the conclusive fact that after 150 years of rule by the World's most highly industrialised power, only 4.4 per cent of the Indian people are themselves industrially employed".

In the field of agriculture he makes the following true observation, a summary of which is reproduced below.

(1) Lack of planning for the peasant by not raising his purchasing power.

(2) That British planners have been carried away by the India of fancy rather than the India of fact, which are poles apart. He cites coal, of the quality obtained is worth Rs. 56/- per acre against four times that amount in England and three times that amount in Japan.

(3) That the majority of Indian agriculturists are still living in terms of the middle ages with no knowledge of soil, rotation of crops, fertilisers etc. Outmoded tools. Cow dung the best natural manure being turned into fuel because no

other substitute was provided for the cultivator. Other fertilisers like ground-nut cakes and bones have been exported. He confesses "this state of affairs let us be frank is discreditable to the British" and admits that the immense task facing the administration in the shape of organisation and religious conservatism should have been overcome for it is "the business of a ruler to rule, and this is one of those occasions where we have not done our business".

(4) The curse of the 'banya', the money-lender; the man who feeds on the life blood of the poor cultivator. With his exorbitant rates of interest. He says "This is an abuse that we should have eradicated at all costs. We have only trifled with it. In the Punjab legislation has restricted the rates of interest on unsecured debts to 18 per cent and the Provincial Ministry in Madras passed a Rural Indebtedness Act which was admirably designed. Otherwise the situation stands much as it has stood for many centuries."

The solution to this evil would have been the banning of the money-lending trade by private individuals. Government Credit Societies should replace this disgusting trade so as to give a fair deal to the debtor. Government Acts restricting the rates of interest levied by the money lender is no solution. The poor peasants and labourers are not aware of these legislations and the 'banya' continues to exploit their ignorance to the full as in the past.

To a large extent this 'laissez faire' policy of

agriculture has been due to the outlook of the cultivator himself. His indolence leads him to cultivate a mentality that is best described as to 'just live for the day.' He is drawn into debt and the hands of the banya, by the irresistible force of custom and tradition in connection with births, betrothals, and marriages. He stages celebrations which land him into debt for many years. To affect any improvement in his condition, he has to be protected from himself by severe Government legislation.

After reading all the above observations, let us not hastily conclude that the British have done nothing for India. During their rule, India has seen advances in many directions, for instance communications, irrigation and education etc, to name only a few.

Why then, will the reader ask, does the Indian raise such a hue and cry about the British? The answer lies in the fact that these advances have been made to a point. A point which does not solve all the problems facing her. This British power has been exercised in this country while India has been gradually slipping behind, till now she has become dependent on the outside world for food, chemicals industrial equipment and her security. This fact rankles in the Indian mind which believes, that with the facilities at hand and possible outside help she could have made a better job if the reins of power had been in her hands. Another factor is that the Indian chafes at being the recipient of political direction when he feels that

he has grown into political majority and is fully capable of deciding his own future.

### *Livestock.*

India has a little more than one third of the world's cattle. Out of this stock of 200,000,000 more than half are superfluous and uneconomical. Radhakamal Mukerjee gives us a clear conception of the inequitable distribution of livestock and the lack of planning of the Government in his book on 'Food Supply'. "There are 67 cattle per hundred acres of sown area in India as compared with China's 15 and Japan's 6 cattle, while the total number of working cattle in the country is only 60,000,000 for about 300,000,000 crop areas (one pair of bullocks for ten acres). A number wholly inadequate for intensive farming. In China animals such as pigs, goats, and poultry which can subsist on by-products of agriculture are maintained in large numbers and supply animal proteins to the dietary. In Holland and Germany the State regulates not merely the breeding from pedigree stock, but also limits the number of calves which can be maintained in a herd of cattle. India must plan deliberately the reduction of her excessive cattle population and aim at fewer but more efficient and healthier cattle, so as to develop a flourishing export trade of cattle with Africa, and the Dutch East Indies, and a combination of intensive crop and fodder cultivation with dairying in his small holdings at home."

Nichols mentions that despite India's possession

of one third of the world's total cattle population one can seldom find a decent glass of milk even if one were able to pay for it. He explains this situation in the following manner "The stark and disgraceful reason for this paradox is the Hindu Religion which forbids cattle to be killed. They can die by inches; yes, they can starve to death, they can stagger about in a state of disease which is sickening to men with even the remnant of pity, but put them painlessly out of their misery? Oh no!"

This sheer dramatization of the situation does not come anywhere near the truth. Ownership of this cattle is not the monopoly of the Hindus. All communities possess cattle if they can afford to keep them, and thousands of cattle are killed daily throughout the country by Muslim butchers to supply the nations needs of animal protein. The cause of this surplus cattle lies in the lack of any plan towards livestock by the Government. State control should have been exercised in the limitation of the herds of cattle in each province. Adequate fodder capable of producing a heavier yield of milk should have been the State's first consideration in agriculture after crops for human consumption. Veterinary examination fortnightly of all cattle in the districts should have been a compulsory measure. Preservation of meat for export as in Argentina would have solved to a large extent the problem of surplus cattle. Lastly it should be the Government policy to educate the farmers on the dangers of excessive cattle, and not leave animal husbandry to the mercy of individual enterprise.

*"London sewage safer than Bombay's milk",*

"London's sewage is three times as safe as Bombay's milk," declared Mr. R. A. Pepperall, Chief Regional Officer of the Milk Marketing Board tonight. Mr. Pepperall, who recently prepared a report on the dairy industry for the Government of India, told a farmers' meeting that the stark truth was that one person in six of the vast Indian population got no milk or milk products. The remaining five received a supply which was usually highly contaminated and quite unsafe unless boiled before use.

"Conditions in Indian cattles," said Mr. Pepperall, "may not compare with Belsen but we have little to pride ourselves upon while there are still black holes in Calcutta, Bombay and elsewhere".

"Mr. Pepperall expressed the view that the Hindu population was faced with the alternative of ultimate famine for themselves, or some kind of modernation in their religious outlook which would permit reduction to reasonable numbers of the cattle population."

"One reason for the decline in India's dairy industry under British administration had been the practice of exporting from India large quantities of cotton seeds, linseed, and groundnuts. These exports had starved India's own stock and deprived her soil of its fertility."

"Mr. R. A. Pepperall had the following observation to make in his visit to the Karachi Panjrapore as reported in the Daily Gazette..... "Karachi

Friday.....Mr. R. A. Pepperall Adviser to the Government of India on Milk Marketing at present, was a notability visiting Karachi recently."

"Mr. Pepperall prior to his taking up the appointment with the Government of India was an official of Milk marketing board of England and Wales."

"During his visit to Karachi Mr. Pepperall inspected the Karachi Panjrapore and was highly delighted by what he saw there. "During the course of an intensive tour of India I have seen animals maintained under a variety of conditions but always find that those in the Panjrapore are treated with consideration, which is well repaid in their milk yield" he wrote about the institution in his remarks."

He added that the Karachi Panjrapore was the best he had seen."

Probably Nichols would welcome the information that a large percentage of the officials in charge of the Panjrapore are *Hindus*.

### *Fruit farming.*

Fruit farming could be fostered to increase the financial returns of the cultivator. In fact if some organised plan was started by the Government to improve communications, methods of transport; grant facilities for fruit preservation, cold storage, canning and easier marketing, India could compete in world markets in the export of fruit. But instead we still see that the cultivation and the marketing of India's large output of fruit is still in an unorganised condition.



## CHAPTER XIX.

## To quit or not to quit.

This question of "Quit or not to quit"? resolves itself into three parts. The Author has in his infinite kindness placed these three parts under review for our benefit.

The first part according to this diligent student of India is that the question of 'quitting' rests purely on moral issues. Moral because of the spirit of the Atlantic Charter and for the sake of the war just fought. In his elucidation of these points he cannot help indulging in a bit of propaganda about the 'warm hearted British public' as personified by Mr and Mrs. Smith who passionately believe in 'freedom' in the same way as they believe in being kind to animals. That they will grant freedom to India despite Churchill's warning that two out of every ten Englishmen gain a livelihood either directly or indirectly through Indian connections, and that in doing so will decide against their interests, because they have a "sneaking regard for Gandhi who is a plucky old blighter and not much of an oil painting to look at".

All very touching of course, even though as one writer once said that the 'British have good cause to remember that Gandhi fought best on an empty stomach'. The guts were there as Nichols says, but they were filled with the resistance of Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience Move-

ments nourished by hunger strikes.

This is neither here nor there, so before we proceed to analyse this question of 'should the British Quit,?' let us add one more qualification to the moral issue. Let us assert that this quitting is imperative on moral as well as *expedient* grounds.

The moral point is well supported by several logical reasons :

(1) The Indians are capable of ruling themselves. To quote a press report ..... London March 29th 1946 "A prediction that India would shortly obtain a proclamation superior to Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858 was made by Mr. Sorensen Member of the Parliamentary Delegation addressing Indian Students here on Thursday".

"Mr. Sorensen said the Delegation had stressed to the Prime Minister and his Cabinet 'Our firm conviction that Indian Leaders both Muslims and Congress are capable of shaping the destiny of India'".

"Professor Levy said, 'All the British Government can do, is to sign the death warrant of the British administration in India' He added 'Like the Soviet Union India will now be faced with the task of mobilising her cultural and economic energy for the common good'".

"Professor Richards leader of the Parliamentary Delegation, commenting on the danger of *famine in India* said the coming famine marks

on a colossal scale the utter failure of the British administration in India"(A. P. of America.)

(2) To implement the continued proclamations that the goal of British intention in India is the creation of self-governing institutions. That India will not need to remind Great Britain of speeches of her statesman like the Duke of Argyle, one time Secretary of State for India, who frankly confessed in the House of Lords March 11th 1869 that Britain had not fulfilled her duty or the promises and engagements made by her.

(3) Because of the results of their misrule which now shows India as a country with the lowest living standard in the world and continually faced with famines. A study of facts connected with India in the past during the Moghal period and much further back to several thousand years before the birth of Christ reveals the country as rich and powerful with a considerable sea borne trade. Nichols' Christian Bible as well as the religious literature of Egyptian and Babylonian Civilisations. The evidence from within the tombs of the Pharaohs, together with reports from envoys sent out from England at the time of Alfred in 850 A. D. and other envoys such as Marco Polo etc. from other countries offer incontestable proof of this wealth which accrued through trade in indigo, spices, muslins, calicos and the other commodities with other countries in the East and Middle East. This history also reveals the high standard of education obtaining at that time and

which was enjoyed by 95 percent of the population who were able to read, write and carry out efficiently the duties of an enlightened civilization.

Further proof of India's denudation of wealth is found in the writings of Englishmen from the time of the East India Company to the present day. Men who commanded positions of authority and whose opinions carry weight.

It is this sad plight which gives occasion for the following press reports; "New York, March 11th Reuter:— Dr. Syed Hussain Chairman of the National Committee for India's freedom speaking on the eve of his departure for India said at a farewell dinner tonight, whoever wants to perpetuate British rule in India is guilty of international immorality. The British rule in India is a rotten and moth eaten system of government. Two hundred years of alien domination have been super-imposed upon the people of India and would have not only demoralised completely but ruined permanently almost any other people on the face of the earth. It is only the Indian people's stamina and spiritual foundation that has made it possible for them to go through this prolonged agony of servitude and still kept their soul intact and their mind functioning. The present system in India should be eliminated and wiped out, not only for the good of India but also for the good of England."

Another press report "London March 23rd. The Moscow radio commentator Mikbail Mikhailov

said tonight, that all his life the ordinary man had been accustomed to hear that English Democracy was the one true peerless democracy, and that Britain encouraged its development wherever her interest was felt.

"When he hears for instance, said M. Mikhailov that throughout the British Empire the citizens enjoy freedom born of the Bill of Rights, The 'Habeas Corpus,' the 'Magna Carta' and so on, his eyes turn involuntarily to one of the largest portions of the Empire, India."

"I will mention just one fact said M. Mikhailov. 'Owing to high property, Educational, and other qualifications only 1,500,000, people—far less than one per cent of the population of British India—were able to vote in the Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly. The British progressive Press points out that the Indian people lack the most elementary human rights. But that does not prevent the various hum-bugging hypocrites from posing as the sole champions of democracy."

The continual drain on the Indian Exchequer as described by Mrs. Annie Beasant in "India: A Nation" she writes "The cost of British Government. The drain of course is part of this cost, but the burden of British Administration in the country itself cannot be omitted. Mr. Digby remarks sardonically that the salary of the the Secretary of State for India during his term of office represented the average annual income of 90,000 Indians. That is a graphic way of putting it and true. Out—

side the 'drain' we have the cost in India itself. The Viceroy draws Rs. 2,50,800 a year, the three governors Rs. 1,20,000 a year each, while Lieut: governors have Rs. 1,00,000. The rest of the salaries are proportionate. We have now nine governors."

"A return ordered by the House of Commons in 1892 (and made in 1900) gave the annual salaries being paid in India for the services of 13, 178 Europeans as Rs. 8,77, 14, 431 Eurasians were paid Rs. 72,95,026 for 3, 309 officials; 11, 554 Indians received Rs. 2, 55, 54, 313. None employed on less than Rs. 1000 a year are noted, so the smaller salaries of ordinary clerks do not come in. In addition there are leave allowances to Europeans of Rs. 46,36,314. Eurasians Rs. 322, 120 and Indians Rs. 12, 18, 743. Pensions paid in India were to Europeans and Eurasians (given together) Rs. 23, 28, 882 and to Indians Rs. 59, 81, 824. In England out of Indian taxation Europeans were paid in pounds sterling £ 3,710, 678, or Rs. 5, 56, 60, 173"

"Another most unjust imposition on Indian revenues, and one of a peculiarly irritating kind is that of the alien Church establishment. The Bishop of Calcutta draws Rs. 45,980, and the Bishop of Madras and Bombay Rs. 25,000 each. The Bishops of Lahore, Lucknow Nagpur and Rangoon draw Rs. 10,200 a year for five years and then Rs. 12,000 a year, the salaries of senior chaplains. There are 134 Anglican 11 Presbyterian chaplains receiving regular salaries, while Roman Catholics and Wesleyans receive 'block grants' and the churches of all four 'may be built, furnished, repaired wholly

or partly at Government expense." In addition their schools and colleges receive huge grants and out of 5,541 scholars in Protestant schools 5,241 are non-Christians. Thus Indian money is spent in supporting a vast agency for insulting and outraging the religious feelings of the Hindu, Mussalman and Parsi 'Heathen', providing a source of civic strife. There is no conscience clause in Christian schools except for Europeans".

"We have seen that the estimated revenue in 1913-14 was over £ 82,000,000 sterling and the expenditure was estimated at a little over £ 81,000,000. It is impossible to say how much the expenditure might be reduced if the Government was Indian, but in the Indian States we find the people better off without state debts, and yielding a revenue to the state without distress of twice and thrice the amount yielded by India (see Naroji page 259)."

Mr. Sarker says "India is a dependency of Great Britain. In consequence of her dependent political position, she has to employ a large number of high English officers (The Corps d'elite must be Europeans as Lord Curzon once said) and a strong garrison of British troops which numbered 10,591 in 1911. The pensions of all these and their savings while in service in India are sent to England. The English cannot breed and multiply in India. They have to send their children above four years of age home for education. A large part of the father's income (sometimes amounting to three fourths) is remitted to

England for maintaining the young ones there. In one year 1910, above 13,800 European soldiers came to India from abroad and 12,000 were sent back to England or British Africa. Very often these numbers have been exceeded. India has to pay their transport expenses".

It is the same story with higher education and examinations in England which directly contribute to this drain.

(5) To avoid the excessive taxation all the proceeds of which do not flow back to the people.

(6) If the Atlantic Charter means anything in the world today.

(7) If the aims behind the last two Great wars were for the benefit of mankind. If the sons of India who fought bled, and died in the cause of freedom have not sacrificed their lives in vain.

(8) If democracy itself has any meaning at all.

The point of *expediency* is fairly evident to even the most casual observer.

(1) Britain has just emerged from one of the costliest wars the world has ever known. Her credit has vanished, her exchequer depleted and with her resources lowered; she now finds herself in the position of a debtor nation. The pressing need of the moment is to re-establish her status, augment her finances and her credit in the modern postwar world. To achieve this, her trade has to



be accelerated to a tempo much higher than in prewar years.

So far the only profitable market left open to her is India. But there is one snag to this solution. The peoples of India have come to the pitch of open rebellion if independence is not granted in the near future.

John Bull is awakening to the realisation that trade with a hostile country will not avail England much in her struggle for national regeneration. He has bitterly learned the lesson of Non-co-operation movements in the past, launched by the Congress and its reactions in the cotton manufacturing cities of England like Manchester and Lancashire.

Matters have come to a head and the only means now at hand for an amicable solution lies in granting India independence. This is a prime matter of *expediency*. The alternative of export or perish.

Within the next twelve months or so, the nations of the world will be locked in a gigantic trade battle. Britain though ever reluctant to part with power will inevitably drive a hard bargain of granting Independence in return for favourable trade concessions.

Another factor that will predispose the authorities in Britain to view the demand of the Indians in a more practical light is the attitude of Soviet

Russia. Russia has now become one of the leading powers in the world, and she will make a determined bid to capture a place in the world markets for her produce. For this plan to be successful she must be in possession of a warm water port. A port that is accessible throughout the year as her own ports are icebound for over 6 months in the year, and the only port answering this purpose admirably is Karachi. Another fact lost upon the man in the street is that the northernmost point of India is only half an hour's flight from Soviet territory by the fastest bombers. This proximity is further menaced by Russia's eastward expansion through Persia. America and her trade push has also to be taken into account. All things considered it is but natural that there will be a lurking fear in the British mind that the future is pregnant with dreadful possibilities if she makes but one false move.

- We demand Independence as a right and not as a form of charity out of the kindness of the warm hearted British, who can only visualise freedom for the Indian in the same light as their belief in being kind to animals.

What greater reason can one advance for the British to Quit than Nichols observation in the same chapter, which offers sufficient commentary on the kind of administration thrust upon the barbarian? He writes "This analysis of the minds of the Smiths may be considered as an insult to the bright new electorate of Britain. But is it? I have talked to many hundreds of young British serving

men in India who should have been at least as well informed about the country as their brothers and sisters at home, and very few of them had even the most rudimentary ideas of the history, economy or geography of the country, and scarcely one had ever heard of any Indian personality but Gandhi. They did not know the difference between a Hindu and a Muslim, nor which community was in the majority, they had no conception of the methods by which the country was governed and though they knew most of them, that Lord Wavell was the Viceroy, they had no idea either of his powers or his limitations. Their ignorance was boundless—officers as well as men—yet they remember in comparison with their relations at home, are *authorities* on the India question? It was an illuminating side-light on the workings of democracy, and it made one wonder not for the first time, if there was really much point in having popular elections at all".

In India, my dear Nichols it is not the workings of democracy but an autocracy. "The Government of India is an autocracy vested in the Secretary of State as representing the Crown, he goes in and out with party changes, but is not directly responsible to the House of Commons (Annie Beasant, India : A Nation).

If one persists in calling this rose by another name, let us presume that it is democracy fully fledged in every respect. But let us not be deluded into believing that it was given to us as one of the benefits of British civilisation. A closer analysis of this situation reveals clearly that the influences

which favoured its development were :

(1) The familiarity that the Indian obtained through education of political ideas and institutions of Great Britain.

(2) The traditions which are the inheritance of English subjects.

The reason why this form of government was introduced into this country was because there was no other alternative. This child of necessity first saw the light of day after the Munity of 1857 which showed up clearly the gulf which separated the rulers from the people, and this was the only way of bridging this gulf. The Indian Councils Act of 1861 was passed to recognise the right of Indians to be represented in the Legislative Assemblies.

By the Act of 1858 the Secretary of State for India was created with an India Council of fifteen representatives whom he could overrule at will. During that year the Civil service examination was sanctioned.

Another Indian Councils Act was passed in 1892 introducing the principle of election to all the government bodies and also gave the representatives the right to discuss fully every question put before them, but did not allow them to vote on the budget question.

1909 saw a few more changes in the constitution through the Minto-Morley Reforms which enlarged the Legislative bodies, gave wider powers to vote and move all matters pertaining to

the public including the Budget.

Act of 1919 saw further improvements such as bicameral bodies in the Central Legislature. The Legislative Assembly and the Council of State constituted on the principle of elected majorities. All Provincial Legislatures were enlarged on the same principles with the same wide powers, with responsibility to the Legislature.

In the Act of 1935 all the departments of the Provincial governments were to be transferred to ministers. Responsible ministers would also handle the administration at the Centre, except the portfolio of Defence, subject of course to the special powers or responsibilities of the Viceroy. By this time the electorate had increased considerably.

Annie Beasant gives us an imposing record of famines during English rule. She writes "That between 1770 and 1900—130 years—there have been twenty-two famines, eighteen according to the report of the Famine Commission of 1880, and four after 1880; In 1770 as we have seen there was a famine in Bengal with 10,000,000 deaths..... in 1783 in Madras, in 1784 in Upper India which left Oudh in a pitiable condition. In 1792 in Bombay and Madras, in 1803 in Bombay, in 1804 in Northern India. In 1807 in Madras, in 1813 in Bombay. In 1823 in Madras, in 1833 in Madras where in the district of Guntur 200,000 died out of 500,000 population & the dead lay unburied about Madras, Masulipatam and Nellore, in 1837 in North India in which a calculation of 800,000

deaths is thought too low by the Famine Commission; in 1854 in Madras, in 1860 in Northern India about 200,000 deaths, in 1866 in Orissa and Madras, in Orissa a third of the population died about 1,000,000, in Madras about 450,000, in 1869 in North India about 1200,000 deaths, in 1874 in Bengal over 1,000,000 relieved and life was saved, in 1877 in Madras 5,250,000 deaths, in 1878 in North India 1,250,000 deaths in 1889 in Madras and Orissa, in 1892 in Madras, Bengal Rajputana, in 1896-97 in North India, Bengal, Madras, Bombay—the number is not given but 4,000,000 persons received relief and in 1899-00 in North India, Central Provinces and Bombay 6,500,000 persons were in receipt of relief—The worst famine on record"—Let us add the famines that occurred since 1930-46.

## II.

The second question is "*Can we quit?*" involving considerations of defence of India.

• He maintains that quitting is possible but not overnight as any irresponsible person would visualise owing to the defenceless state of the country. When the British decided to come to India they certainly arrived overnight. So their quitting overnight would not give the Indians the sleepless nights he imagines, for India has lived for many centuries before the advent of the British and she will survive for centuries after their departure.

In the distant past she shared civilisation honours with the Egyptians, Babylonians, Syrians

Persians, Romans, and Greeks. Most of them are dead or lie in ruins, but she lives on, and this survival, one is tempted to add is not due to British assistance. The British in this country have mostly held the opinion that their presence on Indian soil maintains the peace of India. 'Pax Brittanica' as one might define it. It is strange indeed that all Imperial nations suffer from the same delusion. Let us quote a more recent reiteration of this deadly bluff. It comes from Prof: Logemann (press report) "Prof: Logeman told the Lower House of the Netherlands Parliament today that although Dutch troops would be used to the full in Java, force alone could not solve the Dutch East Indies problem and that he expected that conditions for fruitful consultations would improve".

"He stated that the meeting at Singapore on Dec: 6th 1945 with Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten Supreme Allied Commander in South East Asia was to determine the line of action regarding protection of life and property in Java".

"White Man's Burden".

"In this struggle force will alas have to be applied to restore the balance that Justice demands of us, he said".

"It is expected of us that we provide a solution to the problem of making it clear to the people of the Indies that they must live together in peace, without one single group being pushed into the corner he added".

"In reply to a question the Prime Minister

added, I am convinced that there are groups in the Indies who need the protection of an objective power which will maintain the balance".

One is lead to inquire on hearing this noble Christian virtue of the West of sharing the black man's burden, unselfishly, if it was only to offer protection that the Britisher came out to India? Would Nichols or other propagandists before or after, have us believe that the East India Company came out here to save the native from killing each other or from being attacked by other nations? Would they also have us believe that there was no other inducement besides this consideration? If so how do they reconcile this claim with the activities of Clive and Warren Hastings and a host of others? Let them read Macaulay before answering; Also let them enquire of those two out of every ten Englishmen who according to Churchill derived their livelihood out of Indian connections.

As for the Indian outlook on the much publicised and hoped for revolution in India when the British quit, let us quote Sardar Sant Singh in his reply to these European wishful - thinkers. "London April 11th (Reuter.) Sardar Sant Singh who is now here on his way back to India from Washington, where he attended the Food Conference stated at a Press Conference here to day that if the worst happens in India and the British concede Pakistan to Muslims there will be a civil war. He was amplifying his statement of last night made at the "Amritsar Day" meeting to the effect that the cost of winning complete independence



though it might be high in human lives would be worth paying for".

"Sardar Sant Singh said, "if this Civil War costs the lives of one million people I shall consider it a cheap price for the freedom which will be ultimately gained. Why should the world be horrified at the prospect of the Hindu cutting the throat of the Muslim in the interests of freedom? Christian cut the throat of the Christian in the two World wars in order to preserve freedom, and American had to fight American before America could gain the prosperity which she enjoys to-day. The question of Hindu and Muslim is purely a domestic issue and it is the business of Indians, and not outsiders to settle it." If bloodshed is inevitable then that is the concern of India".

To come back to the question of national defence, let us set down his misgivings. He asks the following questions, a summary of which is given below with their answers.

Question: "How is India or Hindu India (according to the author) going to defend herself when she has been wedded to the doctrine of non-violence?"

Answer: If Hindu India is incapable of taking up arms, then may we ask why the British Government recruited Hindus into the Army to fight against her enemies? Why she gave Hindus the Victoria Crosses and other awards for gallantry, if they are considered unable to fight? Are Nichols and Co. trying to make out a strong case of martial emasculation on the part of the

Hindus who have gained renown from the dawn of history as Sikhs, Maharattas, Dogras, Rajputs and Gurkhas.

Non-Violence is the Congress creed, meant for use only in their fight against the British system of Government. This was the only effective weapon that could be used by the Indians to bring the authorities to their knees. Violence would be of no avail against the British who besides having the superiority of weight of arms, created the one-sided situation of being the sole possessors of modernised methods of warfare and equipment. Force would have been met by greater force.

Non-Violence was the child of Tolstoy's brain. It rendered the power of arms helpless and the only hope of the Government to counter successfully against these passive resisters was to provoke them into a state of violence, that could easily be suppressed.

That the Congress have no intention of allowing non violence to be their national outlook on the question of defence against foreign aggression we have Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya who at Bombay Nov. 9th 1945 "declared that when Congress came into Power, Every person shall be taught the use of arms and the system of licensing shall yield place to registration of arms".

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel strong man of the Congress in a recent press interview replying to the question as to whether Independent India will

have an army of its own, stated "Of course we shall need such an army to defend ourselves and we shall have it!"

Question - He inquires of those who have rejected the creed of non-violence whether they will resort to the use of catapults, barge poles and rotten eggs as weapons of defence?

Answer: The defence port-folio has always been in British hands. They have regulated the size of each of the services the Navy, Air Force and Army. The policy and training of its personnel is directed by British Ministers. If we have been reduced to a state of using the above-named weapons (namely barge poles, catapults and rotten eggs) the onus of the blame rests on British shoulders. To emasculate the civil population and prevent them from resorting to the use of lethal weapons and so becoming a potential source of danger to the authorities, various repressive measures such as the Indian Arms Act 1878, Explosive Substances Act 1908, State Offences Act 1851, Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act 1907 and the infamous Press Acts.

In all probability if there was no opposition from the people even those dangerous weapons described by Nichols such as barge poles, catapults and rotten eggs would be denied the Indians under some Government act or other.

Because the Congressman seeks to lay the responsibility on the proper quarters for India's lack of a proper Army, Air Force, Navy & muni-

tion factories Beverley Nichols dismisses these attempts as irrelevant.

Question: Referring to the Indian Navy, Nichols tells us that before the war the entire navy consisted of a few small patrol ships. Since then, a few corvettes, mine-sweepers and sloops have been added. He then asks what one suggests that the British do about this toy navy, the size of which was inadequate for a country the size of Denmark? He wants to know if this navy should be allowed to face the next combination of aggressors, or should its fate be left in the hands of the United Nations? And if so, what do the United Nations receive in return for this trust? Also that the United Nations should be given an assurance that Mahatma Gandhi will not start any anti-recruiting drives.

He goes further with this naval theory using such fine phrases as "A navy does not drop from the clouds. It is a miraculous and delicate instrument, a creation of nerves as well as steel, united with blood, as well as rivets, it is in some ways the greatest expression of a nation's genius. Has India the genius to create a navy?" And while India is preparing a navy he demands the reason as to why the British taxpayer should foot the bill while the British Navy carried on this work of protection, unpaid and unthanked?

the British. If the East India Company found this maritime trade diminished considerably or almost extinct why did they not revive it even to suit their own ends? Their subsequent policy clearly shows their reluctance to foster any maritime ambitions in the Indian.

If the Navy had a few ships before the war, let us ask the Minister for Defence the reason for this deplorable situation. He being English will probably be able to supply the proper answer.

'Politicus' in the Blitz issue of April 6th 1946 gives us an insight into the workings of the official English mind. "The Royal Indian Navy today is neither sufficient nor efficient. Even with the great expansion that took place during World War II, the number of ships and men remains very low, indeed. With three frigates, 2 corvettes, a few sloops, Bangors and Bathursts, India can never hope to defend any part of her 4,000 miles coastline. Most of the ships recently acquired for the R. I. N. are old cast-offs from the Royal Navy."

"It is time that Britain stopped this game of dumping her rubbish and scrap iron in India. If an efficient Indian Navy has to be built up, the best course would be to get good ships not from Britain alone, but from any and every country from where you can obtain them. If Iran can have a share of Italian and Japanese war ships why cannot India?"

The following letters to the Press (Statesman).

on this subject is worth studying.

## "INDIA AT SEA"

"Sir..... B. J. in his amazement over India's lack of realism displays the characteristic incompetence of foreigners to gauge the Indian mind. His obvious assumption is that British rule in India is a blessing and accepted as such by Indians as a whole."

"Many riddles about Indian mentality including one that perplexes B. J. would be solved if the seemingly fantastic fact is faced that an average Indian is not particularly worried about passing under another rule. A country which loses millions in dead due to starvation under one rule, can have no terror of concentration camps, the Gestapo and Jap barbarities."

"Does B. J. expect an Indian whose worldly belongings can be carried on one frail shoulder and who has no idea where and how he will get his next meal, to worry about the defence of India's frontiers? There are myriads of such Indians. The so-called blessings of British rule are enjoyed by an infinitesimal minority. The rest would be themselves shocked to know what they feel about things."

"Accusing a dead people of fatalism or lack of realism makes no sense. Indians are a dead people. Such matters as defence and armaments have ceased to worry them. That India has nothing to lose except her chains is no truism nor even verbal flourish. It is the plain truth served

neat. Indians would evince a more lively interest in the R. I. N. and such things if they had anything more to lose."

"It is shocking, the mad frenzy of countless of my countrymen over British defeats and enemy victories. Yet I am convinced that they are not pro-Jap: or pro-German. To be either they would have to have an intimate knowledge of Jap and German. That they obviously have not. Their seeming perversion is a projection of the experience of British rule."

"This is no anti-British tirade, but cold logic. I pass it on to B. J. as a specimen of Indian realism" yours etc W. G. Sheorey, Nagpur, April 3rd." Another....."Sir.....Apropos the letter by B. J. and your editorial comments may I point out that the authorities are responsible for this apathy in the minds of people towards national defence?"

"As far back as 1926 in reply to the demand for the development of the Indian Mercantile Marine in the Central Assembly Sir Charles Innes, then Commerce member observed. 'Why then have other countries, other nations, thought it necessary to reserve their coastal trade? It is because they thought that in the long run it would pay them to take that course in the interests of their own safety. They had to take that course because in times of war they might want their own mercantile marine to feed their people, because they wanted that marine as a second line to their navy. All I need say on that point is this,

that India is fortunate in that, that overmastering necessity is not present in this country. India's shores are protected for her by the British Navy".

"Is it any wonder that Indians who do not feel a sense of responsibility because they have no fundamental power in their own country, do not take any active interest in Naval defence? Yours etc. Mansukhlal M. Mehta Calcutta April 3rd 45".

If he contemptuously refers to the role of the United Nations' custodianship, may we remind him that this same body of nations was the means of saving Britain and the Empire. The British Navy (not including the Dominions) did not elect to face the combination of aggressors alone at any stage of World War I or II. Before America's entry into World War II England even leased her possessions to obtain 50 old destroyers. May we also ask what the United Nations got out of this joint defence, and the same could be given by India after the next war as her share of the cost?

If a navy cannot be built in twenty years owing to the different factors that contribute to its ultimate development, then we are justified in raising the question as to why this important aspect has been neglected by the British particularly in view of their declaration during the last war that Independence for India was their chief intention.

It is pointless to labour this fact that India's navy is still in its infancy after a quarter of a century, when if earnest effort had been made



during this time the 'toy navy' would have grown to gigantic dimensions. This is how Britain implements her promises.

As for expecting gratitude from the India for British naval protection one is more inclined to the view that the boot is on the other foot, when one takes into account all that was taken out of India, and that the Navy helped in the role of keeping others away from doing the same thing or sharing the spoils. The British taxpayer has least to shout about.

As for the British Navy continuing to carry out these duties of custodianship unpaid and unthanked, we in this country have other views on this subject. We are not blind to British interests in this country. Her navy will continue this custodianship whether requested to or not, only to ensure that England's markets for her export trade is still kept free from dangerous competition.

Question: On the subject of the Indian Army he informs us that it would be ludicrous for any one to suggest that these men, who have just emerged victorious in the battles for Britain against her enemies, are capable of undertaking the defence of India. The reason being the paucity of trained personnel and the shortage of Indian officers. He is unable to make up his mind whether this is due to selfishness on the British side to part with power, or the Indian reluctance to assume responsibility. He again inquires if this army will drop from the skies fully equipped and endowed with the powers to become the finest

weapon in the hands of the nation. And while this army is being created he would like to know "if India was to be defended by an international army of Poles, Free French, Americans, Russians and Chinese?" He also asks "if it is going to be simple for a Zech lieutenant or a Norwegian sergeant to teach the complications of modern tank warfare to a bunch of non-violent Madrassis?"

Answer. The army in India at the outbreak of World War II stood at approximately 180 thousand. This figure included the Internal Security Army and the Field Army. The British at no time in their association with India ever subscribed to the policy of handing responsible positions in the Army to Indians. In the past it did not suit their purpose to have Indian Commanders-in-Chief, Generals, or even Brigadiers. Their reluctance to grant these onerous positions was not influenced by any ideas of inefficiency on the part of the Indians, but on their experiences during the Mutiny and other uprisings. A fully equipped Indian Army led entirely by Indian Officers would be a serious menace to the ruling power, if that army happened to change its loyalty from the crown to the people.

The capability of Indian generalship and the fighting qualities of its men have been in evidence throughout India in such epics as the Mutiny, the Mysore and Carnatic wars, The Moplah Rebellion, Siege of Multan and the Sikh wars etc. Hence the British policy of officering the Indian army with Englishmen was a move in

favour of the rulers. Gradually Indianisation was introduced and though it has proceeded at a snail's pace till 1938, the war just ended was responsible for its acceleration in every direction..

If India has no right to be defended by an international army, then we question Britain's right of making use of this same army of Poles, Free French, Americans, Russians and Chinese in her fight against the Axis countries.

The Zech Lieutenant and the Norwegian sergeant would find it just as simple as the British instructor did to instruct these bunches of non-violent Madrassis in tank warfare.

What's more, even the British soldier had the mortification of having further instruction at the hands of the Hun in the advanced and modernised method of construction of tanks and the strategy behind their use. Lessons they learned in France and in the North African Desert, Lord Gort and General Ritchie could add postscripts to this effect.

Moreover Britain had no difficulty in imparting instruction to these non-violent Madrassis, who were drafted and formed into battalions with high sounding titles as Queen Victoria's Own Madras Sappers and Miners and the Pioneer corps, etc.

If we have no army the question must be referred to the Commander-in-Chief. If we are content to be frightened into accepting the doubts placed before us by the kind Mr. Nichols, as to our complete unfitness to defend ourselves, no positive resul

of high society. I am asking for something higher. I ask for a bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era, even though there may be protests and wailings from some of us".

Someday these political movements and appeals will penetrate British indifference and John Bull will incline himself to the wishes of his subjects.

That this forecast is slowly being translated into fact, we have such concrete evidence in the form of the Cripps proposals in 1942. This was turned down by all the parties because of the retention of the all important portfolio of Defence from Indian hands.

The psychological background to these proposals cannot be recaptured and the Cripps 'take it or leave it' mission fizzled out into nothing.

In June 1945 Lord Wavell initiated the next move towards a settlement of this Indian deadlock by inaugurating the Simla Conference. The political leaders met; but were unable to agree on the question of communal representation of members in the proposed Interim Government. This marked the second failure to arrive at any satisfactory solution from the start of the Second World War.

Early in 1946 a joint all parties Parliamentary Delegation came out to India and toured the length and breadth of the country to investigate the mind of the people and find means of transferring power to Indian hands. On their return to the United Kingdom the Cabinet Mission

Its can be achieved through our ambitions, and less chances still if they are to be undermined through lack of confidence. We have to make a start in building up a properly equipped and fully manned war machine for the defence of our homeland, and the sooner we apply ourselves to the tasks ahead the better.

### III.

The last query is *Will we quit?* The question is superfluous, the quitting will become a fact sooner or later. The tide of Indian public opinion is slowly rising to this level. No longer will the Englishman be able to say that the average Indian in the street desires the continuance of British rule in this country. If John Bull has a conscience he could not help but pay heed to Mahatma Gandhi's appeal "That 400 million people are hungering for Freedom. They want to be left alone. They are not savages. They have an ancient culture, ancient civilisation, such variety and richness of languages. Britain should be ashamed of holding these people as slaves. - You may say 'You deserve it' If you do I will simply say it is not right for any nation to hold another in bondage".

"When slavery was abolished in America many slaves protested, some even wept. But protests and tears notwithstanding slavery was abolished in law. But the abolition was the result of a bloody war between the South and the North, and so though the Negro's lot is considerably better than before, he still remains the outcaste

of high society. I am asking for something higher. I ask for a bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era, even though there may be protests and wailings from some of us".

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composed of Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Pethwick Lawrence and Mr. A. V. Alexander set out for India to confer independence in conformity with Mr. Attlee's historic speech.

The British Prime Minister Mr. Attlee in a speech in the House of Commons on March 15th 1946 declared "My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help India to attain freedom as speedily and as fully as possible. What form of government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide. But our desire is to help her set up forthwith a machinery for making that decision".

With remarkable patience and tact these members of the Cabinet Delegation managed to bring all the political leaders of the largest parties to the conference table again. After eight weeks of suspense the second Simla Conference issued the oft-repeated statement that agreement could not be reached by the communal leaders. In the absence of this agreement the British Cabinet Delegation put forward certain proposals which they termed as 'recommendations' for electing a Constituent Assembly with plenary powers for a long term constitutional settlement. These proposals were not in the nature of a Communal Award as in 1932, or like the Cripps Draft declaration of 1942. They are merely recommendations, which can be defined as rough outlines on which the unity can be achieved in the country. Full provision is made for the acceptance, alteration and rejection of these recommendations. A practical interpretation of which inclines one to the

view that the Constituent Assembly has the power to usher in an independent India at her own convenience, and at which time full powers will be granted.

The Muslim League Resolution on 15th March 1946 and the Congress Resolution in Bombay on Sept : 23rd 1945 possess no common ground for a settlement, hence the solution advanced by the Cabinet Delegation can rightly be regarded as a *Compromise Solution*. A solution which does not grant all that the two major parties demand. The recommendations are meant to be regarded as a practical approach to bridge this gulf that separates the two major parties.

There are certain defects in this scheme which are exercising the hair-splitting tendency of the Indian political mind. One is that British India and the States should merge together into a Union. In this respect it is superior to the Cripps offer which gave the States the option of adhering to or seceding from the Union. Though the Congress is prepared to accept the States position either within the Union or out of it, the difficult question arises that in the former event is how the representatives of the States should be selected, the method of negotiations, and since the peoples in the States are roughly 25 percent of the total population in India they would have to represent the people rather than their rulers.

The next defect is the limited scope of responsibility dealing with the *port folios* of the state. The number allowed should also include



the Sapru Committee's recommendations of power to settle inter-provincial differences, the co-ordination of all matters relating to administration and legislation throughout the provinces. The direction of the essential services like the Posts and Telegraphs, Commerce & Currency together with the power to raise finances; Defence, Communications and Foreign affairs.

Contrary to the Congress desire for a strong centre with residuary powers to the provinces, the Cabinet Delegation offers a limited or attenuated centre with lesser powers to the provinces or groups of provinces.

Thirdly a representation of the population in the constitutional making body is worked out at the ratio of one per million inhabitants. This solution has been recommended by the Delegation as being the nearest substitute to adult suffrage. On a closer investigation it reveals that the bug-bear of communalism comes to life again through members of a community electing its representatives. To avoid this even the Sapru Committee commended parity between the Hindu & Muslim representatives so that joint electorates could become a practical proposition. In this respect the Cripps Draft Declaration made it clear that 'membership of the Lower Houses of the Provincial Legislatures should as a single electoral college proceed to the election of the constitution making body.'

Communalism is rightly viewed by far seeing statesmen as a strong factor in creating dead-

locks, and it is essential that efforts should be directed to avoid the causes which lead to these communal deadlocks.

Finally we arrive at the weakest point of these proposals and that is the provision made for the grouping of provinces on the basis of communal majorities. Objectively this concession which grants the privileges of provinces to group themselves as distinct from the powers of the Union has been made for the benefit of the Muslim League.

In the Cripps Draft Declaration provision was made for the creation of a separate constitution for the provinces that did not accept the new constitution, and that both should enjoy equal status in every respect. But the Cabinet Delegation's recommendation of the formation of three groups with the right of provinces to 'opt' out, or secede gives a loop-hole for these provinces to even repudiate the Union as well as the group. The Union having no power to prevent the formation of groups at its expense is the first step towards the ultimate defeat of a united Indian State, in which communalism as in evidence to-day would be non-existent. On the other hand these groups might gravitate towards the Union but that is a distant possibility.

We have examined at some length the proposals of the Cabinet Delegation. Now let us turn to opinions from various quarters on the same subject. The first foreign comment is borne out in a press report "London May 22nd 1946, The

first Soviet comment on the new proposals for India was made tonight. The source was the commentator Yakov, who speaking in English over the Moscow Radio said 'It is symptomatic that though the British Government has declared itself ready to make India independent, this proposal does not proclaim even Dominion Status for India, let alone independence. At the same time the police in India has been reinforced, prisons are being enlarged and the strength of the British Army is being maintained. This does not seem to indicate that the provisional government of India will have even a shred of real sovereignty'".

"Expressing doubt about Britain's real intentions, Yakov said that the British proposals were in reality not new, and adds 'This is but a rehash of the proposals made at the Simla Conference which were turned down by the National Congress and the Muslim League. In my opinion, even a superficial examination brings out the illogicity of this proposal. The authors of the proposal themselves realise this. The Viceroy said that given goodwill even outwardly illogical settlements might be effective.'"

"Lord Pethick-Lawrence said in his broadcast that India desired independence and the British Government was prepared to grant this, but concrete proposals put forward in the British Government White Paper do not accord very well with such statements'".

"Yakov is not a regular commentator and nothing is known of his background".....(Reuter).

The Hindu Sabha's reaction is contained in the following press report....."Lahore May 21st .....The view that the Cabinet Mission's announcement amounts to virtual division of India is expressed by the Working Committee of the Lahore Hindu Sabha at a meeting here.

"The Committee in a resolution says The Provincial and Indian State units would have sovereignty at their places, and as such Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab, Sind and the N.W.F.P. will be at the mercy of an unchangeable Muslim majority in the legislature elected through separate electorate."

"They cannot look to the Union at the centre with extremely limited powers for protection".

The Hindus declare that the proposals were intended for the benefit of the Muslims, and the Muslim League on the other hand insists that it was designed for the benefit of the Hindus. So far some authoritative sources such as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan of the Frontier Provinces and Mr. Bardoloi Premier of Assam condemn the 'groups' as a means of perpetuating communalism which would defeat the purpose of the Union.

The Sikhs have raised a cry of betrayal of their community by the British and the Untouchables have sent a reminder to Churchill that they look upon him as their saviour to deliver them from the abyss into which they have been consigned by the Labour Government's Proposals.

Mahatma Gandhi has come forward with his

opinion as set down by the Associated Press of India dated May 26th Bombay "after four days of searching examination of the State paper issued by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government my conviction abides that it is the best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances" says Mahatma Gandhi under the caption 'An Analysis' in today's Harijan".

"Mahatma Gandhi adds 'It reflects our weakness. If we would be good enough to see it. The Congress and the Muslim League did not and could not agree. We would grievously err if this time we foolishly satisfy ourselves that the differences are a British creation.'"

"The Mission have not come all the way from England to exploit them. They have to devise the easiest and quickest method of ending British rule."

"We must be brave enough to believe their declaration until the contrary is proved. Bravery thrives upon the deceit of the deceiver".

"My compliment however does not mean that what is best from the British standpoint is also best or even good from the Indian. Their best may possibly be harmful. My meaning will I hope be clear from what follows."

"The authors of the documents have endeavoured to say fully what they mean. They have gathered from their talks the minimum they thought would bring the parties together for

framing India's charter of freedom. Their one purpose is to end British rule as early as may be. They would do so if they could, by their effort leave a united India not torn asunder by internecine quarrel bordering on civil war. They would leave in any case".

"Since in Simla the two parties, though the Mission succeeded in bringing them together at the Conference Table (with what patience and skill they could do so, they alone could tell) could not come to an agreement, nothing daunted them. They descended to the plains of India and devised a worthy document for the purpose of setting up the Constituent Assembly, which should frame India's Charter of Independence free of any British control or influence. It is an appeal and an advice. It has no compulsion in it. Thus the Provincial Assemblies may or may not elect the delegates. The delegates having been elected may or may not join the Constituent Assembly.

"The Assembly having met may lay down a procedure different from the one laid down in the statement. Whatever is binding on any one person or party arises out of the necessity of the situation. The separated voting is binding on both the major parties only because it is necessary for the existence of the Assembly and in no otherwise. At the time of writing I took up the statement, re-read it, clause by clause and came to the conclusion that there was nothing in it binding in law."

"Honour and necessity alone are the two binding forces. What is binding is that part of it which commits the British Government. Hence I suppose the four members of the British Mission took the precaution of receiving full approval of the British Government and the two Houses of Parliament. The Mission is entitled to warm congratulations for the first step in the Act of Renunciation which the statement is. Since other steps are necessary for full renunciation I have called this one 'a promissory note'".

"Though the response to be made by India is to be voluntary, the authors have naturally assumed that the Indian Parties are well organised and responsible bodies capable of doing voluntary acts as full as, if not more fully than compulsory acts. Therefore when Lord Pethwick Lawrence said to a press correspondent 'If they do come together on that basis it will mean that they will have accepted that basis, but they can still change it by majority of each party if they desire to do so', it was right in the sense that those who became delegates well knowing the contents of the statement were expected by the authors to abide by the basis unless it was duly altered by major parties. When two or more rival parties meet together, they do so under some understanding. A self-chosen umpire (in the absence of one chosen by the parties, the authors constitute themselves one) fancies that the parties will come together only if he presents them with a proposal containing a certain minimum and he makes his proposal leaving them free to add or subtract from, or altogether change

it by a joint agreement.”

“What about units”

“This is perfect so far, But what about the units? Are the Sikhs for whom the Punjab is their only home in India, to consider themselves against their will as part of the section which takes in Sind, Baluchistan, and the Frontier Province? Or is the Frontier Province also against it's will to belong to the Punjab called 'B' in the statement, or Assam to 'C' although it is a predominantly non-Muslim Province? In my opinion the voluntary character of the statement demands that the liberty of individual units should be unimpaired. Any member of the sections is free to join it. The freedom to 'opt' out is an additional safeguard. It can never be a substitute for the freedom retained in para (15) which reads "Provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures and each group would determine the provincial subjects to be taken in common". It is clear that this freedom was not taken away by the authors by section (19) which "proposes (does not order) what should be done. It presupposes that the chairman of the constituent assembly at its first meeting will ask the delegates of the provinces whether they would accept the 'group' principle and if they do, whether they will accept the assignment given to their province. This freedom inherent in every province and given by 15(5) will remain intact".

“There appears to me no other way of avoiding the apparent conflict between the two paragraphs as also the charge of compulsion which



would immediately alter the noble character of the document. I would therefore ask all those who are perturbed about the group proposal and arbitrary assignment, that if my interpretation is valid there is not the slightest cause for perturbation."

"There are other things in the document which would puzzle any hasty reader, who forgets that it is simply an appeal and an advice to the nations showing how to achieve independence in the shortest time possible. The reason is clear. In the new world that is to emerge out of the present chaos, India in bondage will cease to be 'the brightest jewel' in the British crown. It will become the blackest spot in that crown, so black that it will be fit only for the dustbin. Let me ask the reader to hope and pray with me that the British Crown has a better use for Britain and the world. The brightest jewel is an arrogation" etc.

That these proposals are the only thing that could have been advanced in the absence of agreement between the major parties is beyond question. They are just to both major parties and are likely to create a stable constitution for India, despite the defects which of course could be overcome with wise statesmanship. It is deplorable that when freedom is there for the asking, petty communal differences should be the predominating factors to frustrate their efforts towards national independence. At no time in India's history or the history of any nation has there been such a bankruptcy of wisdom on the part of politicians who are only able to view every step through communal eyes, filled with distrust of each other and

suspicion at British actions.

An editorial in the Daily Gazette may 24th 1946 sums up the Indian attitude in a nutshell "India has been accustomed far too long to depend on England to straighten out her difficulties, to rely on herself at the psychological moment. That is a tragedy. The people are unable to realise that the liberty of their dreams awaits to be gripped. It is of course possible that in a popular body a particular view which the nation had been favouring for years and years would not find favour. Whatever the reason behind it it is certainly not for England to come and say that things must be done this way and that. When Britain refused to grant freedom, there was a howl. when she accedes to the Indian demand there is again a howl, because she would not favour one party in preference to another. This attitude is the greatest common measure of agreement between the two leaderships of the Congress and the Muslim League. Independence implies the right to go your own way. As it is democracy that this country prefers, then let the people decide for themselves. Why fight shy of a popular verdict? Judged from every standpoint wisdom dictates an acceptance of the Cabinet Delegation's recommendations by the entire country."

#### IV;

Whether the leaders accept the proposals or not is left in the lap of time. Someday independence will become a reality, whether it is tomorrow or a day in the remote future, but it *will* come.

The British will quit, but this quitting will not be complete in every respect. Physically they will have gone, but their spirit will be left behind, for with all her sins of omission and commission Britain's association with this country has been beneficial to a very large extent to India. The infusion of idealism, the nurturing of the country's first steps into the machine age, the love of freedom; the concentration on hygiene and cleanliness, the instilling of public-spiritedness, honesty in business, and all that an honest conscientious *English Gentleman* stands for, is the heritage that Britain will leave behind, never to be forgotten in India's interesting history. Above all the Englishman as an individual will be missed. At the moment mob frenzy on the political issue has blinded them to the true character of the British, but on their departure the Indian will awaken to a sense of loneliness. The feeling that he has lost a friend whose merits were not fully appreciated whilst the association continued. Better results could have been achieved had the best been fostered in each other, but I suppose there is no use in regretting the past. It might have been destined, as so aptly put by Omar Khayyam.

"The moving finger writes.

and having writ.

moves on; nor all thy Piety nor wit.

Shall lure it back to cancel half a line.

Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it".

## CHAPTER XX.

### A Historical Survey of India.

To a great many people India only lives during the British period of occupation. A period which to them appears important because it is synonymous with their conception of civilisation. The earlier part of her heritage is passed over as being unimportant. On the contrary any serious student of a country's characteristics and its solution of the problems confronting it will appreciate a complete historical background, which would enable him to assess the full value of its standard of civilisation.

A study of India's historical background confirms the high claims of culture and civilisation obtaining in those periods, and enables us to realize the terrible depths of economic poverty and culture to which she has sunk in the latter stages of her historical evolution.

The History of India can be classified into several distinct stages. (1) Pre-Vedic Age (2) The Vedic Era (3) The Egyptian Invasion (4) The Decline of Hinduism and the Rise of the New Doctrine of Buddhism (5) The Persian Invasion (5a) The Greek Invasion (6) The Maurya Dynasty (7) The Kanwa Dynasty (8) The Andhra Rule (9) The Kushan Dynasty (10) The Gupta Era (11) The Muslim Invasion (12) The Arrival of A New Race of Muslims and the Establishment of the Moghul Rule (13) The European Expedition and the Consolidation of British Power.

We shall give a thumb nail sketch of the various stages that India has passed through.

### (1) PRE-VEDIC STAGE.

When the Aryans first set foot on Indian soil, they introduced the great books called the VEDAS. It is through these great books that one may get a glimpse of the glory of India of the past. Western historians have ever been reluctant to credit India with any definite historical contribution to the world's history before the invasion of this country by Alexander the Great. The stories of the RIGVEDA, one of the four books now extant, have been confirmed to a very large extent by the excavations of MOHENJO-DARO in Sind and HARAPPA in the Punjab. All Archaeologists are agreed that these cities were in existence 5,000 years before the birth of Christ. The Maya and Inca civilisations of South America have produced further evidence of the affinity that existed between these civilisations and the one current in India during those times. This tends to prove that in addition to carrying on a sea-borne trade with the rest of India, the Dravidians (Original inhabitants of India) had the time and resources to prosecute invasions in such distant lands as the Americas.

Further proof of this cultural greatness is found in the historical records of such great civilisations as that of Babylon, Assyria, Greece, Persia, and Egypt etc. Also in the coins of ancient days, literature, the evidence of tombs of former Kings, Pharaohs and rulers. The sum total of all this evidence substantiates the conclusion

that India was a power of some great importance in the fields of commerce and trade during the period of 12000 to 17000 B.C. (or to put it correctly 17,000 to 12,000 B.C.).

It is indeed unfortunate that her earlier history has been lost in the dim mists of time, and that only through a few Aryan records some insignificant part of that glory can be recaptured.

## (2) THE VEDIC AGE.

Or that part of history, which can be chronicled as India's middle history, starts with the arrival of the Aryans on Indian soil. This great race of people whose home was in Central Asia began to emigrate to other parts of the world from 18000 B.C. to 17000 B.C. One branch of this highly cultured race found its way into India. These series of invasions across such formidable terrain as high mountain ranges, fords, rivers in the North in those early times have captured the imagination and fancy of all historians. These achievements over the forces of nature set the standard of their culture.

They found an ancient civilisation of the Dravidians attaining a very high standard on their arrival, and with their inherent drive and forcefulness conquered the whole of North India pushing the original inhabitants further south. Their coming marked the origin of definite Hinduism. It was in their times that such famous codes of social, religious and moral conduct were formulated and which still continue to rule the Hindu society of today. To Manu "The Law Giver"

goes the credit for devising this regulation of life in minute detail in all spheres of activity, and which reveal the highly advanced state of Aryan society.

The Aryan race was divided into groups of tribes each with their own chieftains. Some devoted their lives to pastoral and agricultural pursuits, while others cultivated the arts and handicrafts indispensable to civilisation. Commercial & trade activities played a very large part in their economic outlook.

Gradually they built big cities that supplanted their modes of living, which became more urban through the rapid development of trade and easier means of communications. The pattern of their lives can be gauged from the two epics which were written in those times. The RAMAYANA and the MAHABHARATA.

The RAMAYANA gives us glimpses of the greatness of that period which records the successes that attended their war-like expeditions, of conquests of good personifications over evil personifications. The sacking of cities of the enemy and the building of beautiful palaces, public gardens and progressive towns in their places. The extolling of all virtues of truth, honour, fidelity, patience etc. and the condemnation of vices.

The MAHABHARATA typifies the second epic. It portrays the dissension that took place within the Aryan fold through petty jealousies. It records the bloody warfare that destroyed the flower of Aryan manhood. Its stories centre

around the heroes and particularly Lord Krishna who is credited with giving the Hindu world its most priceless treasure. The GITA a Gospel that demands every Hindu to live righteously.

This period of Aryan influence lasting over 5000 years left an indelible mark in the history of this country. It enriched India in many ways, but the wars of the MAHABHARATTA marked the turning point in Aryan greatness. Its decline is marked from that period.

### (3) THE EGYPTIAN INVASION.

It was during the Aryan decline that several invasions were carried out by the Egyptians who came as far as Kashmir & Jammu. They continued these invasions from 2000 B.C. to 1000 B.C. when Rameses II was the last to lead an expedition into India.

### (4) DECLINE OF HINDUISM AND THE RISE OF THE NEW DOCTRINE OF BUDDHISM.

The chaos and unsettled state of affairs since the decline of Aryan influence and the subsequent foreign invasions gave birth to a revolutionary spirit. In 609 BC we can see the first signs of the change which was more marked from 561 B.C to 150 AD. This is distinctly known as the Buddhistic period, which began in 567 B.C., (the birth date of Lord Buddha) and ended with the last Buddhist King Kaniska.

As more and more of the people of India fell



under Buddhistic influence, the decline of Hinduism became increasingly apparent. Within a short space of time another religion Jainism founded by Prophet Mahavir made its appearance during the Buddhistic period, but failed to capture many converts.

### (5) PERSIAN INVASION.

This period is remarkable in that it produced several dynasties and witnessed many important events. One of these important events occurred early in the 6th century B.C. King Darius of Persia gathered a strong army and invaded India in 520 B.C. He succeeded in overrunning Sind and annexed part of the Punjab, which were subsequently used as Imperial possessions.

#### (5 a) GREEK INVASION.

Later in 326 B.C. Alexander the Great led his Macedonian army through Afghanistan into India. They swept everything before them, till they reached Jammu and Sialkot in the North. Defections in the Greek army forced Alexander to give up the expedition and retreat back to Greece. In 323 B.C. Alexander passed away thereby putting an end to any more Greek hopes of conquest.

### (6) MAURYA DYNASTY.

About this time Chandra Maurya, popularly known as Chandragupta collected a strong force and attacked the Greeks and Persians in the North of India. Successful in this venture he turned his attention to the Magadha Kingdom

which had assumed great importance during the Buddhist period. This Kingdom now known as Bihar was soon overcome by Chandragupta whose further successes enabled him to extend his rule over the whole of North India down to the Nerbudda river in the South.

The Greek Ambassador Megasthenes has recorded his impressions of Chandragupta's administration during his stay in Pataliputra (Patna). He was considerably impressed by the sobriety and industriousness of the people, the skill of the artisans, and methods of arbitration. The village system or "Panchayat", which was responsible for India's economic wealth, and divisions of society according to their vocations. His war council which dealt in detail with such departments as Commissariat, transport (elephant, and horse) The control of such services as the cavalry, infantry, navy etc; and the wide powers and responsibilities of Municipalities, each consisting of over 30 members. The supervision of all departments of commerce; the Imperial services and a strict but equitable system of taxation. The number of tiny dependencies under Chandragupta numbered over a 100 and Viceroy's responsible to him personally administered these dominions. This record of Megasthenes shows up in an exceptionally favourable light, the high standard of organisation which was the hallmark of the Maurya Dynasty. Bindusara succeeded his father Chandragupta and extended his kingdom as far as the port of Madras.

On Bindusara's death his son Asoka ascended the throne and became one of the most famous names in history. Asoka famous even to this day for his reputation for piety, power & wisdom extended his rule still further till it embraced the whole of India. Several little kingdoms existed in the south at that time through. acknowledging the suzerainty of Asoka. The most powerful of these was the Andhra Kingdom followed by the Pandyan and the Chola kingdoms.

Asoka's death in 273 B.C. was the signal for the disruption of the Maurya Empire which eventually broke up after Asoka's sixth or seventh descendant.

(7) The little kingdoms and dependencies broke away from the centre and the shortest dynasty in history succeeded the Mauryas. The KANWA DYNASTY was not strong enough to ensure unity. After a rule of less than fifty years it succumbed to the Andhra dynasty.

#### (8) THE ANDHRA DYNASTY.

This dynasty of Telegu speaking people who occupied the Deccan assumed an independent attitude and gradually extended their influence as far as Sind, Cutch and Gujerat. Their rule lasted over a hundred years.

In the south the struggle for power between the Pandyan and Chola kingdoms culminated in victory for the latter, whose kingdom flourished till the Mohammedan invasion of South India by Sultan Ala-u-din one of the Muslim rulers in the

14th century after the birth of Christ. All the tiny dynasties which ruled over some small segment of India during those historical times like the Sunga dynasty, the Vijayanagar kingdom, the Phallavas and the tiny Rajput kingdoms in Central India are just off shoots of the major events that formed a distinct channel for India's history to flow through, and need not be taken into detail-  
ed account in the general outline of the most important epochs that shaped India's destiny.

The history of the north is more important during this period. Disunity followed Asoka's death which encouraged marauding hosts to invade the country and rulers of Greek descent formed independent states in the Punjab that came to be known as Indo-Greek influence or the invasion by the Scythians.

Other nomadic tribes from Central Asia swept down further still and established a Sakka Dynasty.

### (9) KUSHAN DYNASTY.

A warrior-like section of the Chinese named Yuechis invaded India, crushed the Indo-Greek or Scythian rule and started a new era styled the KUSHAN dynasty. This dynasty's influence went beyond the confines of North India. It took in the whole of Afghanistan; Though this dynasty continued to function in Afghanistan, it lost its sway in India around the third century after the Birth of Christ. It is also of interest to note that with the termination of the Kushan dynasty, the

Andhrá kingdom in the Deccan also came to a close. A short period after Kaniska's (Kushan King) death a decline in Buddhism was noticeable. Hinduism having absorbed the lessons of Buddhism entered a period of revival called the Hindu Renaissance.

### (10) THE GUPTA ERA.

Of all the above dynasties by far the most famous was the MAURYA Dynasty. In the 3rd century AD another dynasty was destined to rise after the Kushan epoch to rival the greatness of the Mauryas. Chandragupta the first conquered many portions of India and started the great Gupta period. His successors enlarged their kingdom at the expense of other kingdoms such as the Sakka in the north and the dependencies in the south. They continued to rule in full sway till the 5th century AD when the Huns appeared. Sikandra Gupta who had to face these invading forces defeated them in his first engagement, but they came again and over-ran the north of India. The Huns under Atilla continued to crush every power in Europe and Asia with their strategy till they weakened their fighting potential through too many engagements and were defeated by the Turks.

The Gupta dynasty began to disintegrate after this defeat at the hands of Atilla. Descendants and relatives broke away and ruled over parts of India till the arrival of Harsha in the 7th century AD. He restored the Gupta dynasty to some extent, and though his rule was extremely

good, it did not come up to the standard of the Gupta rulers. His descendants saw the ultimate downfall of their empire towards the latter part of the 7th century AD. Hindu renaissance reached its peak in the Gupta period, which saw such immortal dramatists as Kalidas during this golden age of Sanskrit literature.

### (11) The MUSLIM INVASION.

The first Muslim invasion began in 711 A. D. The Arabs crossed over into Baluchistan and Sind, but were thrown back in their advance upon Rajputana. In the 10th century the wealth of India attracted Sabuktin, the Sultan of Ghazni, a province in Afghanistan. He invaded India and succeeded in capturing only the city of Peshawar. His son Mahmud of Ghazni, a man of determined and forceful character invaded India repeatedly (17 times) established a firm foothold in Lahore and took much plunder and booty back to Afghanistan.

Even though the inhabitants of India were fighting among themselves they succeeded in withstanding the onslaughts of the Muslims for almost five centuries. Rajputs who put up a bitter fight were led by their beloved leader Prithvi Raj till 1193 AD. They repeatedly rolled the Muslims back to Lahore. His death left the throne of Delhi vacant for the Afghan conquerors, who held the reins of power till 1625 AD.

### (12) THE MOGHUL PERIOD.

After four bitter battles of 1519-1520-1524,

Shah Jehan succeeded Jehangir. He inherited all the virtues of Akbar. His fame has spread throughout the world for building one of the Eight Wonders of the World, the TAJ MAHAL in Agra. On his death the throne was occupied by his son Aurungzeb.

When Aurungzeb ascended the throne he did little to enhance the glory of Moghul rule. In fact his rule was so marred with persecutions and repressions, that his subjects as well as his own children revolted against him. His accession can rightly be regarded as the biggest catastrophe the Moghul line ever suffered and which ensured the dissolution of Moghul rule as a power of any consequence.

During Moghul rule the Independent states of Surat, Bijapur, Golconda etc in the Deccan saw the rise of another great figure, Shivaji who was destined to establish Maharatta power over many parts of India. The forcefulness and spirit of his leadership succeeded in welding the Maratha people together, so that they soon became a strong and united nation. In the year 1694 he was crowned Chief of Maharashtra. He died six years later, but he bequeathed a legacy of the Maharatta spirit of resistance to his son, that Aurungzeb in his victorious march to the South found it extremely difficult to overcome. Shivaji's successors carried on the wars of Independence lasting between 20 to 25 years with the Moghuls, till they succeeded in imposing their own terms with the rulers in Delhi. The Moghul Empire broke itself on the rise and power of Maharatta glory.

and the battle of Panipat in 1526, Babur led his Moghuls into India. 1526 saw the arrival of a new race of Muslims who were to enrich the country with their literature, art, language and ways of living.

Babur within a few years of his victory over the Pathan (Afghan) ruler Sultan Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526 AD was compelled to battle against the Rajputs at Fatehpur-Sikri. He was victorious but did not long survive this success. His son and heir Humayan was conquered by a Pathan chieftain and fled the country. Humayan's son Akbar, a mere lad not yet in his teens fought and defeated the Pathan.

Akbar came to the throne in 1556 AD, and richly earned the reputation of being India's greatest Muslim ruler. This great king combined his wisdom, generosity, tolerance, power and able statesmanship for the good of his peoples. He set his seal on the history of the country. It was during his reign that Suttee (the practice of Hindu widows burning themselves on their husband's funeral pyre) was forbidden; The remarriage of widows was sanctioned and encouraged; Child marriage was banned and also the practice of live animal sacrifices.

Jehangir succeeded Akbar, but did not possess his father's ability to rule wisely. It was during his time that the British received permission to trade and erect factories at Surat, Ahmedabad, Cambay, etc. (1613 AD).



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The new Maharatta kingdom saw the first Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath assume the reins of power. He was succeeded by his son Baji Rao who consolidated the influence held by his father and extended his sway. These successes enabled the Maharattas to form the famous Maharatta Confederacy of Chieftains of Poona, Baroda, Gwalior, Indore and Nagpur. So strong did this Confederacy become, that they ruled over a great portion of the country for over a 100 years till the arrival of the British, who wrote the last chapter to their greatness.

### (13) THE EUROPEAN EXPEDITION AND BRITISH RULE.

We now arrive at the European invasion of India and the establishment of British rule. Let us study in detail the methods employed by them, as they are unique in the annals of history. Never was conquest achieved through such subtle methods. Before we go into this study let us accept as a fact that these European adventurers did not come all the way from Europe to India just to protect the poor native. They came for trade. India in those days despite the continual wars and maladministrations of Aurungzeb etc still possessed sufficient wealth to encourage aggression.

In the beginning of the 15th century AD the Portuguese found their way into India under the guise of traders and established trade centres on the west coast of India in such places as Diu, Goa, Daman and Calicut.

They were followed by the Dutch who were unable to compete and went further east to annex the East Indies, now known as the Dutch or Netherlands East Indies.

In the same era (16th century AD) the French built a few factories in Surat and Pondicherry and later extended to Chandernagore. Denmark started an East India Company but made no impression whatsoever. Other companies were floated such as the Ostend Company & the Emden Company by Austria and Prussia, but these met with a similar fate.

In 1606 the English landed on the West coast and started negotiations in Masulipatam. In 1613 the Moghul Emperor Jehangir accorded permission to the English to set up factories at Ahmedabad, Cambay, Surat. From these they were able to open a few more trading posts at Gojo and Calicut.

When Charles II of England married Catherine of Braganza, Bombay was handed over to the English as a wedding present and the Company operated from there for a while.

On the East coast through the Moghul and native rulers' beneficence, they were allowed to establish themselves in Madras and a portion of Bengal and build forts to protect their factories.

From the establishment of these factories we perceive the next inevitable step of the erection of fortresses. Garrisons of troops both English and Indian were recruited to man these forts.

Clive became the first Governor in the Company. He was placed in charge of Fort St David. In the five years that followed Clive amassed a personal fortune and added to the power and wealth of the Company through methods that were devoid of honour or honesty. He stooped to bribery, forgery and low intrigue to gain his ends.

In the year 1755, Suraj-ud-Dowla of Delhi attacked Fort St William in Calcutta. He imprisoned part of the garrison in a room, which according to English historical records was called the Black Hole of Calcutta. Because of the close confinement with little or no means of ventilation, only a few out of the hundred odd prisoners survived the ordeal. Clive with his infinite art of persuasion managed to convince Suraj-ud-Dowla that he was his friend, who could be trusted implicitly. Having secured the trust of the Nawab he then set about undermining the confidence of the native officers in Suraj-ud-Dowla. He bribed them to create disaffection with the troops and forged letters to get them to attack their master. In 1757 at Plassey he engaged Suraj-ud-Dowla in battle and defeated him. Though he had avowed nothing but friendship for the native ruler.

He then sold large portions of kingdoms belonging to his one-time friends for millions of pounds sterling to traitors on conditions beneficial to himself and the Company.

On his return to England the House of Comm-

Before long they had built impregnable forts in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Though these have been demolished, their names and locations still exist in those big cities to this day.

In 1702 the Companies in England united and formed the United East India Company with a board of Directors in England. These Directors appointed their own agents, governors and raised their own armies of mixed nationalities namely English and Indian.

Of all these companies interested in India only two survived serious competition, the British and the French. Their policies were shrewd and they set out to exploit the unsettled conditions of the country by aiding chieftain against chieftain, ruler against ruler with troops and officers. This sordid intriguing by the rulers and the traders at the expense of the independence of the country created an opportunity for Dupleix, the French Commander to decide to annex a portion of India for the French. For a while his strategy in the field was invincible and he moved from success to success. The English anxious to counter this move were at a loss to proceed till Robert Clive, a writer in the Company conceived a plan and boldly carried it out. In 1751, he marched on Aroot with a force of English soldiers and Indian sepoys and seized it. He held this against the enemy and so paved the way for British rule. In 1760 Colonel Coote smashed French hopes of a Franco Empire in India by defeating the French forces decisively at Wandiwash.

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ons challenged the fortune that he had accumulated illegally. He managed to escape the consequences because of his services to the Company. He returned again as Governor. In 1774 his conscience getting the better of him forced him to commit suicide.

He was succeeded by Warren Hastings whose record rivalled that of Clive. His crimes for which he was impeached by the House of Commons, was motivated by his lust for wealth. He filled the coffers of the Company with gold and lined his own pockets, but stained its honour through helping Sujah-Dowla of Oudh to murder the Rohillas in a private war with the help of the Company's soldiers for a heavy price; The coercion of the Begums of Oudh to part with their wealth; and in the swindling of the child heir to the ruler of Bengal. The careers of these two men, Clive and Hastings, is dealt with in detail by Macaulay. Hastings ruled from 1772 to 1785 as Governor-General.

Lord Cornwallis became Governor-General in 1786. He extended the rule of the Company by fighting Tippu Sultan in the Third Mysore War with the help of the Nizam of the Deccan and the Maharatta Confederacy.

The Carnatic was finally added to English possessions through the Marquis of Wellesley who fought Tippu Sultan in the Fourth Mysore War and defeated him with the assistance of the Nizam of the Deccan. Tippu lost his life in this engage-

ment. Again the forces of intrigue and defection helped the British forces in this victory.

The Maharatta Confederacy began to show signs of mutual distrust and jealousy and engaged in futile quarrels. The Maharatta wars which took place early in the nineteenth century ended with the dissolution of the Maharatta Empire in 1818. The Peshwas and their glory passed into the pages of history and the Princes became dependent on the goodwill and paramountcy of the English.

A peace treaty was concluded with Ranjit Singh, nicknamed the Lion of the Punjab. This peace lasted for over thirty years during Ranjit's life time. This great fighter formed a very powerful Sikh kingdom in the Punjab, but its greatness was cut short following the death of this King.

His successor marched against the English and after four bitter battles known as the First Sikh War in the 1840s were repulsed. Three years later they gathered another strong army and inflicted a heavy defeat on the English in the Second Sikh War at Chillianwala.

The British determined to recapture their influence in the Punjab defeated the Sikhs at Multan and Gujarat and so annexed the Punjab, in 1849.

Lord Dalhousie's rule started in 1845 and ended in 1856. He annexed Jhansi, Nagpur, Oudh